

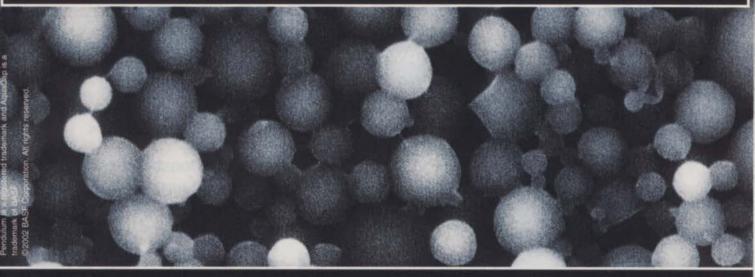
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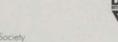
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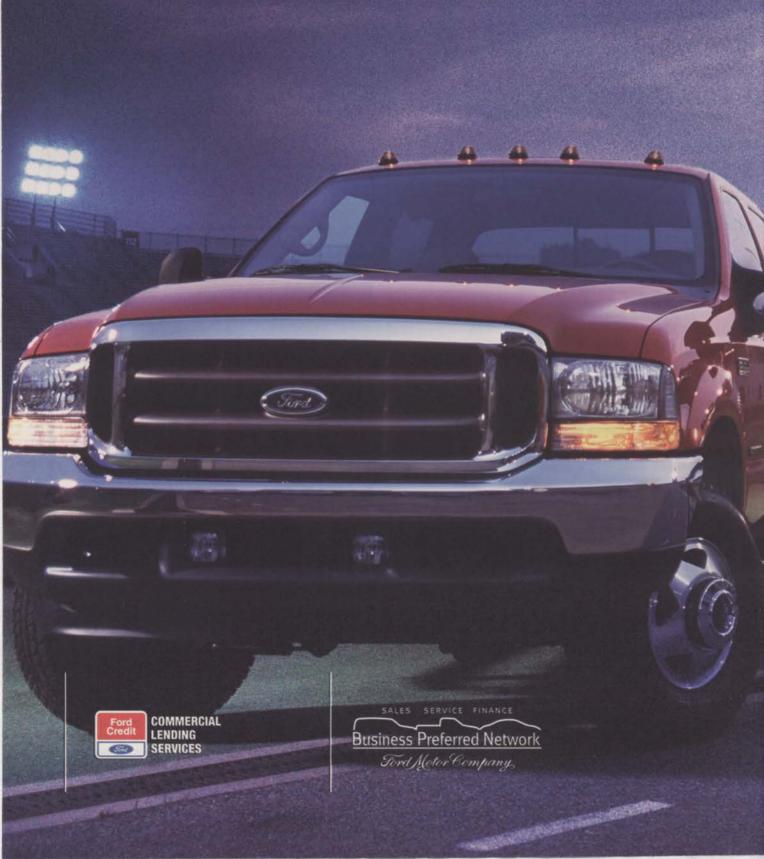
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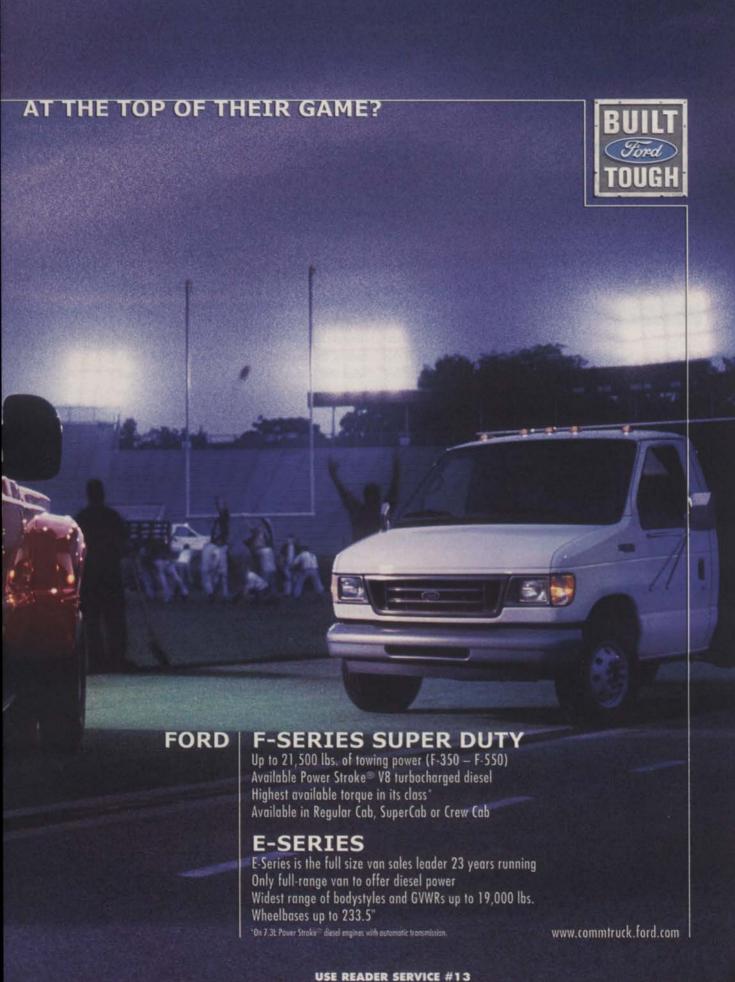
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Editor's Focus

"Furious activity is no substitute for understanding."

- H.H. Williams

A Lesson from the Best

I spent the better half of a week in October with a dozen of the best landscape contractors in the country. Their names aren't important here, but I assure you they represent some of the brightest minds and the most successful businesses anywhere.

As I've said before, interacting with successful business leaders is one of my favorite parts of this job. Business is exciting, but it's also incredibly challenging, and I relish the opportunity to learn from those who are proven successes. Knowledge is power, right? Well, that means the more I can learn the more I can grow, so meetings like these are times for me to sit back, listen and ask questions.

What struck me about this gathering, however, was the humility and desire for continued education displayed by the group. Again, these people could convincingly claim to have the answers. They have all built successful companies, and almost anyone in this industry would gladly trade their own company for one of these firms. But this group isn't satisfied and they aren't arrogant. They know that their past successes stand as nothing more than testimony to the fact that they have solved some parts of the business puzzle. They

remain much more focused on identifying the remaining pieces, which they'll tell you are still numerous.

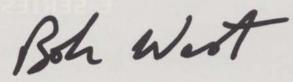
Throughout our four days of discussions, I was continually impressed by each contractor's interest in learning from one another. That thirst for knowledge originates with one key belief – continued success requires ongoing improvement. And where does improvement come from? That's easy – you keep learning.

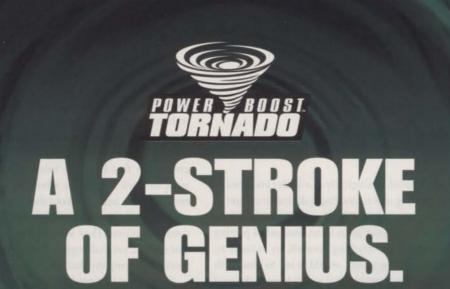
Complacency must be an easy and enticing trap for accomplished people to fall into. After all, if you've already built a business that provides a lifestyle beyond what you ever expected and has earned the respect of your employees and peers, what else is there? Obviously, there's a great deal more, although what continues driving entrepreneurs varies by the individual.

Still, I come back to the idea that regardless of what drives you or the goal you pursue, knowledge is the key. How much do you know? What ideas do you have?

In reality, not enough people in this industry (or most others, for that matter) acknowledge the value of information or new ideas and dedicate the necessary time to learning. Ask yourself, when was the last time you or your management team actively sought out new ideas to put to work in your business? When was the last time you visited another landscape company to learn how it runs? How often do you read business books and spend time discussing the author's key points and how they relate to your work?

These are all different educational opportunities that require minimal effort and offer tremendous potential. The key is whether or not you put forth the effort. If you do, your business will undoubtedly benefit. If you don't, then you should also ask yourself how you're going to continue surviving in this increasingly difficult business climate without getting better.







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<u>In Minor's League</u>

I would like to do something to change the culture in my organization. Where do I start?

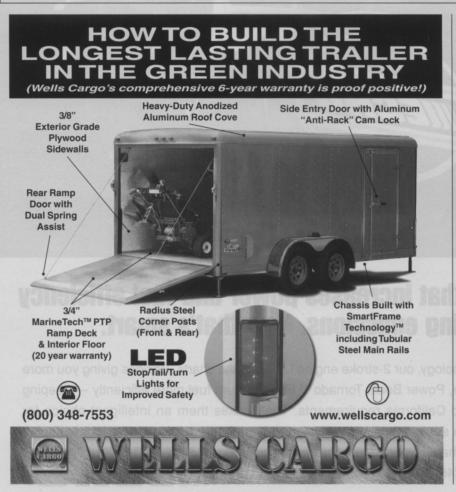
First and foremost, strategically as a leader you need to focus on creating and cultivating a desirable culture in your company – a majority of your time should be spent with this as your main focus. Instead of putting out fires and doing everything yourself, try to foster an environment where others would want to deal with those issues. Any company that wants to go to the next level has to do this. Let's talk about why this is so crucial to a company's success.

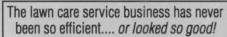
First, take a look at what your associates really want out of a job. The days of just wanting a fat paycheck are gone. In fact, research shows that 75 percent of all employees are happy with their compensation. The same research suggests that compensation is third or fourth on the job satisfaction list. What associates really want are recognition and appreciation for a job well

done. They also want the ability to take initiative. They want job security and they want to be part of a great organization. By that I mean a leader in their industry, a leader in their community and a company with a great team that has high vales and standards. They want to work for leaders who motivate, inspire and energize them and care about their well-being, who are sensitive to their needs and who maintain open lines of communications. They want to work in environments that are fun, yet challenging. Simply said, they want to work for a company that has a desirable culture.

Companies that create a desirable culture benefit in many ways. They are going to attract and retain the best talent and their associates will stay longer which will result in higher productivity, more loyal employees, improved morale in the ranks, and a more team-oriented atmosphere.

The benefits of creating a desirable culture are pretty convincing. The question, then, becomes, 'How do I do it?' In the most simplistic terms, I think you create an organization that's obsessed with putting your em-





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In Minor's League

ployees first, serving their needs, and creating an environment where people want to work and want to produce. I could go into great detail regarding the specifics of how

Instead of putting out

fires and doing everything

yourself, try to foster an

environment where others

would want to deal with

those issues.

you want to get there but rather than do that, let's talk about process.

The first step is convincing yourself that having this type of culture is right thing to do. I would be naïve to suggest that this is the only way to be successful from a financial perspective in business. In fact, there are many businesses that have handsome profits but don't have great cultures. What I can suggest is that your organization can succeed financially and grow significantly while you and your

staff have a culture that exhibits great care for your people. At the end of the day I think you will be more satisfied as well. You've got to convince yourself this is a long-term approach to doing business and not just a temporary band-aid solution for a labor problem. Commitment is the key not just from you but also from your managers. You have to get everybody involved and assess the or-

ganization and then develop an action plan.

Frankly, a change in your leadership style may be in order. It starts at the top and then filters its way down into the organization. Understand that change like this doesn't just happen. You and your people don't change over night. You can't just

say you want to be this way and then just go away and hope it happens.

Evaluate your current situation through surveys, focus groups and ad hoc interviews and then train your managers and supervisors regarding what it takes to have a great culture. This starts as a commitment and then becomes a total cultural change. Once you get everyone on the same page, it becomes fun and, most of all, it becomes re-

warding because having a positive culture is the right thing to do.

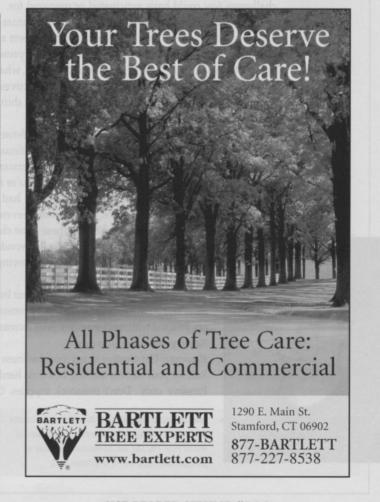
In addition to serving the industry as a consultant and speaker, David Minor is the William M. Dickey Entrepreneur in Residence and director of the James A. Ryffel Center for Entrepreneurial Studies at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. Prior to joining TCU, David was the president of Minor's Landscape Services, a 300-

employee, former INC. 500 award-winning company he founded in 1978 and sold to TruGreen-ChemLawn in 1998. Readers with questions for Minor can fax them to Lawn & Landscape at 216/961-0364 or e-mail them to bwest@lawnandlandscape.com.

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In The Office

Human Resources for the 'New War'

Only a short time ago, human resources professionals and business owners were fighting the talent war, desperate for *quality* workers or, in some cases, any workers. Last summer, turnover slowed as we watched blue-collar workers join the ranks of unemployed M.B.A.-graduate, dot-com workers.

And then, out of nowhere, came Sept. 11. Enter confusion, fear and economic uncertainty. Welcome to the "New War" in the workplace. Almost overnight, the focus of CEOs, business owners and management changed. Depending on where your business is located, you may have dealt with in-house post-trauma counseling, ethnic or religious harassment, or, perhaps the most difficult – employees who tragically lost their lives. All of this, combined with declining revenues and anxious customers, resulted in business challenges few could have anticipated or prepared for.

So, where are we today and what does the future of business look like? Ask any economist or labor expert and you'll get a different answer. Why? Because our present circumstances don't fit current business models and, what's more, there aren't any historical patterns or perspectives to draw from. We are in the midst of a true paradigm shift in business and, this time, we're on our own.

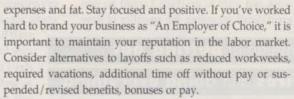
It has been said that the best defense is a good offense, If this is true, perhaps the most prudent advice is to continually focus on and manage what we do know and understand, while capitalizing on our strengths. Remember, you're not alone. Over the past year, many companies have had to rethink policies, procedures, people, strategies and revenue

> projections. If you are facing these same challenging business realities and you're wondering how to respond, consider the following: *Reality*: Anxious customers

> Response: Don't reinvent yourself or your business. This is not a time to risk confusing consumers. Proceed with caution on any price increases. Reality: Revenue slowdown

Response: Get creative to get more business in. Roll up your sleeves and dig in a little harder. Preserve cash. Don't overstock supplies. Cut

Jean Seawright is president of Seawright & Associates Inc., an H.R. management consulting firm located in Winter Park, Fla. She can be reached via e-mail at ipileggi@seawright.com or at 407/645-2433.



Reality: Rising unemployment

Response: Be more selective in your hiring. Hire only productive employees who believe in your mission, philosophy and values. Enhance your hiring process to better screen potential employees.

Reality: Concern about hiring only authorized workers Response: Revisit your INS I-9 forms and procedures. The federal Immigration and Control Act requires that all new hires complete an I-9 form and submit valid documents that

establish their identity and work eligibility. Do not hire anyone with suspicious documents. Review I-9 forms for current employees.

Reality: Employees called up for military duty

Response: Make certain that your Military Service Leave policy is current. Grant leave to service members, reservists and National Guard members and be prepared to reinstate employees if they return within five years. Offer COBRA.

Reality: Potential harassment, discrimination or violence based on national origin or religion

Response: Redistribute up-to-date policies stating the company's commitment to a workplace free of violence, illegal discrimination and harassment. Retrain managers to recognize and prevent bias, and investigate violation allegations. Allow employees to express patriotism, but ensure they do not offend others with racial epithets or name calling. Reality: Plans for an IPO, merger, acquisition or joint venture Response: Proceed with caution. Consider structuring deals in cash rather than volatile stock.

Reality: Employees rethinking their priorities

Response: Help employees feel that belonging to the company means something. Managed properly, this shift can foster teamwork and loyalty. Employees may be less willing to devote long hours to the workplace. Offer family recognition and consider telecommuting or more personal time off. Reality: Changes to employment regulations, benefits and tax laws

Response: Employers should expect to see a number of changes on the horizon related to taxes, health and welfare insurance, investment programs, unemployment benefits and other regulations. Stay in touch with your advisor, consultant or professional to keep you abreast of changes.

Yes, most of us are back to business by now. But we are far from back to normal. I recall that as we approached the new millennium, I advocated that leaders were going to need the very best in terms of wisdom, good judgment, creativity and guts. Little did I know . . . today, it seems, we could all use a double dose of each.



<u> Market Trends</u>

IN YOUR TURF

Fall Armyworm Alert

This year has been a big year for fall armyworms, according to Rick Brandenburg, turf entomologist, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, N.C. These pests are still showing up in golf courses, home lawns, sod farms, newly laid sod and almost all other forms of green turf.

"They got into turf early, they came in record numbers and they have decided to stay well past their welcome," he said. "A lot of turfgrass is still suffering from fall armyworms and there is no reason to believe this is going to change until we have a hard frost."

Summer droughts only added to the problem because armyworms were forced to feed on lush turfgrass since much of the other vegetation was dry. "This made the fall armyworm numbers seem even higher in turfgrass since they congregated in such areas," Brandenburg said.

In some instances where recent rains have given the turfgrass a flush of new growth, the damage is temporarily masked, Brandenburg pointed out. "Thave seen all sizes of fall armyworms, but many this year are medium to large in size and can cause immediate damage," he explained. "Fall armyworms often lay their

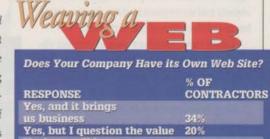
plained. "Fall armyworms often lay their (continued on page 16)

Summer droughts increased the fall armyworm population this year. Photo:

Destructive Turf Insects

A Web site can attract new clients and retain current ones, unless it's not user-friendly. Since the average person's attention span while surfing the Web is less than 30 seconds, according to the Indiana Department of Education in Indianapolis, this means a site has to capture interest in a rather short amount of time.

To aid landscape contractors in building Web traffic, the department



Source: Lawn & Landscape Online

21%

suggests these six basic steps to creating a captivating Web site:

one within a year

we'll have one

No, and I don't expect

- Gather information Create a bookmark of your favorite Web pages for inspiration and make a list of resource sites you'd like to incorporate into your page.
- Determine the intended audience This affects site design and content. For instance, current clients will seek information like additional services and invoice information, while potential clients will look for basic company facts.
- 3. Create a storyboard Write concepts on different pieces of paper, cut them out and, then, arrange them until you have a storyboard structure you like. Remember, the top structure of the site should be in a menu format, leading visitors to available resources. Always leave

room for additional "hot" buttons.

- Plan your navigational tools Every page should have a link to either the main menu or homepage, guiding users around easily.
- 5. Create an aesthetically appealing Web page Although content is more important than a "glitzy" page layout, visual presence plays an important role. Make sure you have some graphics, various background colors and font sizes and colors as well as photos.
- 6. Establish credibility Include the author's name, contact information, name of hosting site and dates of when the page was last updated. Update your page often – whether daily, weekly or monthly – to encourage users to return.

IN THE NEWS

Consumer Sentiment Sinks

NEW YORK — A waning job market and unpredictable stock market dented consumer sentiment for the fifth straight month in October, raising concerns that a consumer-driven recovery could soon be in jeopardy, Reuters reported.

The University of Michigan's preliminary October consumer sentiment index fell sharply to a reading of 80.4 from 86.1, market sources said. That was far below analysts' forecasts for a reading of 85.7.

The drop was led by a steep fall in the expectations index, which measures attitudes about the 12 months ahead, to 72.4 from 79.9. The current conditions index, which links to spending, fell to 92.9 from 95.8.

Additionally, Americans continue to give the U.S. economy low ratings in recent Gallup surveys. A majority thinks the Unites States is still in a recession and nearly six out of 10 said that the economy is getting worse, not better.

So far, consumer spending, which drives about two-thirds of the U.S. economy, has remained robust, in part from the lowest interest rates and mortgage rates in more than a generation. But an earlier report that said retail sales fell 1.2 percent provided evidence of an already slowing pace.

Market Trends

(continued from page 15)

eggs on shrubs, fence posts, signs and other objects and movement and/or damage often begins at the edge of the turfgrass."

Lawn care operators should inspect clients' turf closely this fall, Brandenburg advised, adding that treatment late in the day is most effective. "I encourage everyone putting down new sod to keep a close eye on it over the next month and be ready to treat on a moment's notice," he said. "A light irrigation prior to treatment may help, but don't expect 90-percent control, especially if the worms were allowed to feed on growth for a week or so before treatment. The key to finishing out this year with some success is to stay on top of the problem."

WEATHER WATCH

El Nino May Bring Drought Relief

BOULDER, Colo. – New federal research suggests the worst of the drought may be over for Colorado and the Southwest, with

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NOV. 14-17 Green Industry Expo, Nashville, Tenn. Contact: 888/303-3685

NOV. 15-16 Interior & Exterior CLP and CLT Interior Exam, Nashville, Tenn. Contact: 800/395-2522

NOV. 19-22 CLIP Users Conference – Ready, Aim, Fire! Baltimore, Md. Contact: 800/635-8485

NOV. 20-23 California Landscape Contractors Association Annual Convention, Honolulu, Hawaii. Contact: 916/830-2780

NOV. 26 Pesticide Applicators Recertification Conference, Cleveland, Ohio. Contact: 614/292-4070

DEC. 4-6 Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show, Denver, Colo. Contact: 303/770-2220

DEC. 5-6 Tree Chemistry & Biology, Portsmouth, N.H. Contact: 800/841-2498

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Market Trends

DEC. 6-7 Plant Biology Workshop 2002, Frogmore, S.C. Contact: 888/290-2640

DEC. 9-12 2002 Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Show, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: 740/452-4541

DEC. 10-12 New Jersey Turfgrass Expo 2002, Atlantic City, N.J. Contact: 732/932-9400

DEC. 10-13 Georgia Turfgrass Conference & Show, Duluth, Ga. Contact: 800/687-6949

DEC. 11 Turfgrass & Landscape Institute & Trade Show, Buena Park, Calif. Contract:

800/500-7282

DEC. 17 Pesticide Applicators Recertification Conference, Dayton, Ohio. Contact:

614/292-4070

JAN. 5-7 Western 2003 Convention & Trade Show, Kansas City, Mo. Contact:

816/233-1481

JAN. 6 Cornell Turfgrass Management Short Course, Ithaca, N.Y. Contact: 607/255-1792

JAN. 7-9 Eastern Pennsylvania Turf Conference & Trade Show, King of Prussia, Pa.

JAN. 8-10 Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show, Baltimore, Md. Contact: 800/431-0066

JAN. 8-10 Montana Nursery & Landscape Association Annual Trade Show & Meeting,

Billings, Mont. Contact: 888/220-1569

JAN. 10-11 Associated Landscape Contractors of America Masters in Management for the Landscape Industry, Atlanta, Ga. Contact: 800/395-2522

El Nino potentially bringing more snow this winter, according to the Associated Press.

But scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) cautioned that recovery from one of the most severe droughts on record will take a while.

Scientists also are unsure of the longterm impact of rising ocean temperatures that may have worsened the drought stretching from the United States to central Asia this year. They said the higher temperatures may be linked to higher volumes of carbon dioxide and other man-made, heat-trapping gases associated with global warming.

"This has certainly been a huge drought for the western United States, with substantial implications across the board," said

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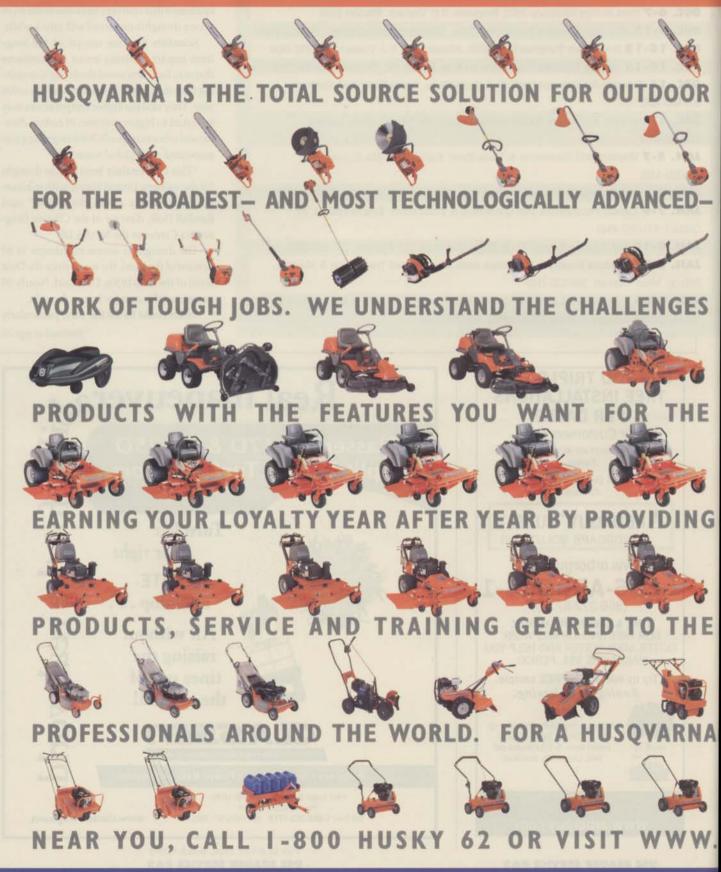
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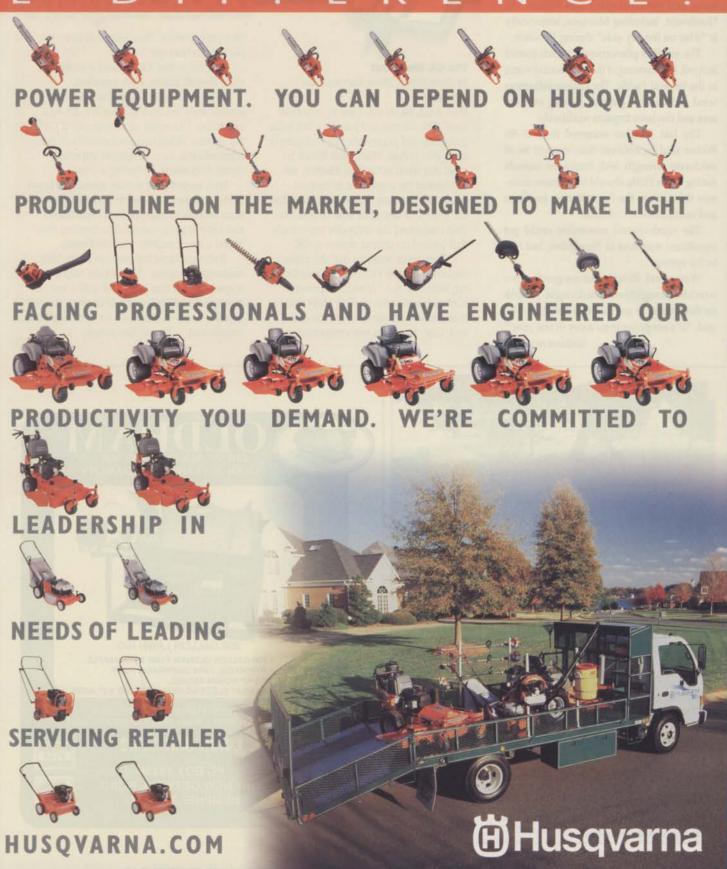
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Market Trends

(continued from page 17)

for the Southwest, including New Mexico and Arizona, because of the return of El Nino, said meteorologist Klaus Wolter. The Northwest, including Montana, historically is "a bit on the dry side" during El Ninos.

The weather phenomenon, which started in April, is a warming of the large area of water in the tropical Pacific. The change influences wind and weather patterns passing over the area and can have impacts worldwide.

The last El Nino occurred in 1997-98. Wolter said he believes this one will be of moderate strength and, based on records dating to the 1950s, should bring more moisture this year to the Front Range, southern and northwestern Colorado.

The north-central mountains could get significant moisture in November, but less in the spring.

Wolter said, though, just one good winter won't be enough to end the drought. "It took us three years to get into this situation," he said. "It's not going to go away in one year."

(continued on page 22)



The GE Work-Out

by Dave Ulrich, Steve Kerr and Ron Ashkanas

How much fat do you have in your business? Not calories and pounds - but extra processes and paperwork that turn simple tasks into chores. When Jack Welch noticed this trend at General Electric, the CEO asked his employees to find out where the business lacked efficiency. The GE Work-Out describes how he and his staff reassessed the corporate paper trails that sucked up time at money at GE.

They were 'working out' the costs,' explained Russell Frith, CEO, Lawn Doctor, Holmdel, N.J. "[Welch] empowered staff teams to come up with ideas to either improve efficiency or reduce costs and, then, the ideas were presented to a division controller. They looked at every aspect of the business.

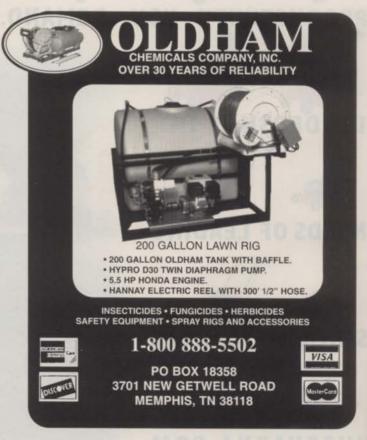
And in the end, GE realized a savings of more than \$2 billion. Frith remarked.

'Arcane procedures like purchasing approvals were required to have five different signatures," he noted as an example of GE's old system. Delegating responsibility to managers allowed them to approve expenses, eliminating weeks of "red tape" time.

Frith assembled a similar meeting at Lawn Doctor, asking managers to prepare suggestions on how to improve their departments and the company, overall. The meeting produced a list of realistic goals and tasks.

Frith suggested the exercise to any size landscape company. "For owners with a landscape business that makes \$40,000 a year, if they can find \$2,000 worth of savings, that's 5 percent, and two grand is a lot of money," he commented. - Kristen Hampshire





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Market Trends

Mattingly's

With the season ending in most parts of the country, now is the time to leave your clients with a good impression of you and your services. Maintenance contractors will soon ask clients to renew for 2003, and those of you completing installations want referrals and possible maintenance contracts for 2003 as well. So, get out and inspect as

EDITOR'S
NOTE: Every
month,
industry
consultant
Jack
Mattingly
offers
suggestions
on key
tasks for
contractors
to focus on.
Here are his
November
thoughts.

many projects as possible now. During your visits, develop a punch list for the crews to address on their next stop. Also, take time to say "Hello" to clients and ask if there is anything else you can do for them.

Also, relay the message to your employees that you want to confirm your quality work with clients before winter. Let them know you will be out there in the next two to three weeks looking at their work. Additionally, how do the

equipment and vehicles look? How about the employees? Remind them to look professional and neat.

Many clients don't realize that this is a perfect time of year to finish certain projects on their sites. You must deliver these proposals into the clients' hands quickly. Once the holiday season begins, getting their attention will be difficult. Set an expectation as to the number of proposals you expect to submit.

You should also consider your holiday schedule. What will happen the day after Thanksgiving? What are you doing between Christmas and New Years? Get the schedule into the employees' hands as far in advance as possible to avoid confusion.

Also, make sure to publish the winter vacation schedule. This will help you configure your crews and schedule work.

Lastly, you should have all of your snow removal contracts out. Call clients who have not responded. Meet with your key people and review your snow removal policies and procedures. Provide written information to all employees who will participate.

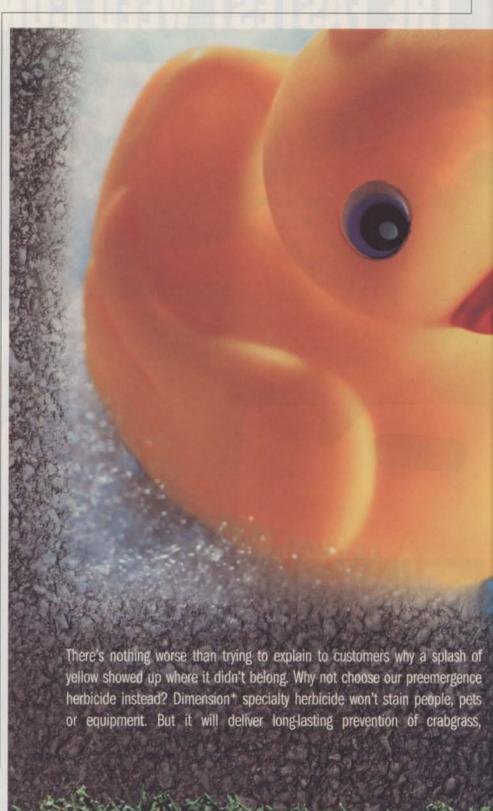
The author is industry consultant, Mattingly Consulting, and can be reached at 770/517-9476 or www.mattinglyconsulting.com. (continued from page 20)

The long-term outlook is complicated by unprecedented warm temperatures in the western Pacific and Indian oceans from 1998 through 2002. Meteorologist Marty Hoerling said the warmer water coupled with unusually cold water in the eastern hemisphere affected the jet stream, steering storms north and away from the Southwest.

BUSINESS BASICS

E-Mail Marketing Methods

Many people receive at least one e-mail newsletter every day. They are sometimes chatty, sometimes informative, sometimes useless dispatches originating from customers, competitors and, often, total strangers. They con-



Market Trends

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tain articles, promotions, ads - and links to more articles, promotions and ads.

Experience shows that when an e-newsletter is well-researched, well-written and loaded with fresh, interesting information, people look forward to its arrival. On the other hand, when e-newsletters are dull, unsolicited and laden with information of minimal interest, receivers curse the senders and regret the day e-mail was invented after promptly deleting these messages.

Landscape contractors who follow iMakeNews.com's Kathleen Goodwin's recommended e-newletter tips can gain client recognition instead of losing their loyalty.

- Shop around. Before settling on the outfit you will be entrusting with sending your enewsletter, do your homework. Some mass e-mailers help you find subscribers and manage your mailing list, while others provide templates, allowing you to simply plug content into the blanks. Regardless of which you choose, the e-mailer should be able to provide statistics to help you determine how the newsletter is being received and whether it's a cost-effective marketing tool.
- · No surprises. Content should be timely and expected to avoid having your message confused with spam. First, ask customers if they would like to receive your newsletter, and, then, provide a link so that signing up is a matter of a simple click. Include a prominently displayed "opt-out" link.
- · Make it worthwhile. Include new product information, market data, quick polls, expert opinions and surveys. Carefully crafted polls also invite client feedback, which you can feature in follow-up e-letters.
- · Mutual benefit. From the sender's perspective, an effective e-letter provides client insights and helps shape a target market profile. But don't use your e-letter as a promotions tool or repetitive customer-service message.
- To the point. Send out the newsletter at least once per quarter. Ideal frequency is once or twice per month.
- · Monitor the reception. An e-marketing firm should tell you which articles your customers are reading first, second, last or not at all; how much time they're spending and whether they are forwarding them to others.
- · Be polite and secure. Look for an e-marketing firm that sends only permission-based, opt-in e-mails and doesn't sell your client lists to third parties. Also, avoid attachments and overdone graphics - keep it simple.



NOVEMBER 2002

Nursery Market Report

2003 SEASON PREVIEW

New Varieties Harvest



excellent accent plant for mixed containers and baskets, as well as a ground cover. These heattolerant plants can quickly grow up to 6 feet.

G

Gazania 'Tiger Mix.' With large,

white blooms striped in sun-bright colors, these compact plants are drought tolerant, vigorous growers ideal for summer beds, containers and baskets.

Geranium 'Florever Red.' Bred to be pollen-free so they don't set seed, these geraniums flower continuously and need little maintenance. Plants are well-branched with strong stems.

Geranium 'Speedy Mix.' An ivy geranium mixture of pastel lilac shades, these fast-growing, strongly branching plants have a spreading habit. 'Speedy' is ideal for window boxes, tubs and hanging baskets.

Gerbera 'Festival Spider Yellow Orange Shades.' These gerberas are in a bold range of vibrant colors, from deep orange to bright yellow. The compact habit and unique bloom make this an outstanding novelty plant.

.

Begonia 'Fortune Orange Shades.' This variety provides a range of color from deep red-orange to a midrange orange variegated with creamy white. 'Fortune's' unusual color is accompanied by a uniform, compact habit and short, durable flower stems.

There is a seemingly endless stream of new varieties coming

down the pipeline for landscape contractors, and 2003 is no

exception. Here is a sneak preview of varieties that are new for

2003, organized alphabetically, from the National Garden Bu-

reau, Downers Grove, Ill. These introductions are appropriate

for most U.S. Department of Agriculture Zones, though some

This is the first article in a two-part series. Look for part

zones are specifically recommended for certain varieties.

two in the December issue of Lawn & Landscape.

Campanula 'Bellringers' (below) and 'Crème de Cassis' Hollyhock (right). Photos: National Garden Bureau

c

Calendula 'Daisy Formula Mix.' The 'Daisy' series represents dwarf, well-branched and durable calendulas. Single flowers are 1½ to 2 inches across.

Campanula 'Bellringers.' Large, pendulous flowers are an eyecatching maroon with spotted interiors in a mix from white to purple-red. Flowering from early summer through autumn, this hardy perennial tolerates partial shade to full sun and is

appropriate for USDA Zones 5 to 9.

Canna 'Tropical Yellow.' This dwarf canna grows up to 30 inches, is naturally branching and available in red, rose, salmon and yellow.



Datura 'Angels Trumpet.' The citrus fragrance of the 6-inch-long, white, trumpet-shaped flowers makes this a must for contractors seeking something new. Delphinium 'Butterfly Mix.' The 'Butterfly' series is a long-flowering strain for beds and containers. With a neat, compact habit, it grows to 16 inches and comes in blue, rose, light blue, white and a mix. Dichondra 'Silver Falls.' Loaded with tiny silver leaves on silver stems, this is an н

Hollyhock 'Crème de Cassis.' This 5- to 6-foot hollyhock features 2- to 4-inch blooms of deep black currant edged in white in cool climates or bright berry with a wide white margin in warmer areas. The plant is appropriate for zones 3 to 9.

ı

Iberis 'Candycane Mix.' A new, fast-growing, uniform series of Candytuft is for large beds and edgings. The series shows even flowering and is available in lilac, purple, red, rose and white. Impatiens 'Cancun Mix.' This combination of salmon, orange and red shades makes a hot, eye-catching mix.

Impatiens 'Dazzler Rose Swirl.' This brilliant bloomer features a rose, picotee edge around a light pink center and is suited for borders, beds and containers. Compact and uniform, the plant has bright, 1½-inch flowers from spring until frost. Isotoma 'Blue Star.' An abundance of star-like flowers cover the neat, cushion-shaped plants. Flowering from spring to late autumn, this is a tough ornamental for bedding and patio.

M

Mimulus 'Magic White Blotch.' Known for its compact habit and early flowers, 'Magic White Blotch' has abundant 2-inch blooms. Mimulus 'Twinkle Mix.' This mix has masses of brightly colored flowers on compact, 10-inch plants. It is suitable for use in beds, tubs, baskets and window boxes. – Ali Cybulski

The author is Contributing Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine and can be reached at acybulski@lawnandlandscape.com.



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USE READER SERVICE #16

Arbor Business

TREES & WATER LOSS

The Anti-desiccant Advantage

Trees require a minimum amount of water to help maintain plant foliage health and vigor. Although trees absorb water, approximately 99 percent of it is lost through leaves. Excessive water loss can cause shock, leaf browning, stress, wilt and possible plant failure. Severity of water loss depends on many factors, including location and growing conditions, timing of weather extremes and plant variety or species.

Anti-desiccants, also called anti-transpirants, can be used to prevent the loss of plant water in trees.

To help understand the value of anti-desiccants, here are definitions of some of the terms associated with their use:

- · Desiccation Water loss or dehydration
- · Transpiration Evaporation of water from the plant, mainly through the stomates in the leaves, to the atmosphere
- Stomates Tiny pores located mainly on the underside of the leaves. Gasses and water vapor enter and exit through these pores.

UNDERSTANDING ANTI-DESICCANTS. Most anti-desiccants are not harmful to desirable plants. An anti-desiccant can be a wax, plastic or resin. The most widely used antidesiccants are pine resin-based, including polyethylenes and polyterpenes. These products are mixed at various rates

with water, forming an emulsion. Once mixed, the solution is sprayed on the target plant material using adequate volume to wet the leaves, needles and stems, top and underside, to the point of runoff. This water evaporates, leaving a flexible "coating." The coat can last as long as two months during the summer and as long as four months during the winter.

When using anti-desiccants, take caution to only spray target plants and not windows, vehicles, decks etc. If these areas are treated. be sure to rinse them immediately, using a mild detergent, if necessary.

the stomata's opening size. This film does not totally encase the leaf, as some movement of gasses and water is necessary for the plant to function properly. Anti-desiccants also do not interfere with growth or negatively affect respiration or photosynthesis when used correctly. Anti-desiccants can be used in a variety of ways, including: • Transplanting Trees. When transplanting deciduous or evergreen plants during the season, apply anti-desiccants

THE WORKS. Anti-desiccants coat the leaves or needles, slowing water loss through the leaf surface and reducing

to reduce water loss. Because trees are pruned and injured when they are moved, the amount of root surface capable of absorbing water from the soil is reduced. Therefore, apply the anti-desiccant prior to removing the plant. • Summer Stress. Spray plants during the growing season to

reduce water loss during a drought. Sprays are most effective when applied prior to drought conditions. Applying antidesiccants or any other plant product during times of stress can produce negative effects, so if your area has a history of drought, spraying before the heat of the summer could help.

· Winter Protection. Contractors most often use antidesiccants as a method of winter protection in locations where freezing temperatures may not allow the replacement of water loss in the plant or soil. Evergreens and turf lose moisture through their leaves during the winter months, especially when windy conditions prevail and plants are located in exposed, unprotected areas. Narrow-leafed evergreens, such as hemlock, juniper, pine and yews, as well as broad-leaved evergreens, such as holly, boxwood and rhododendron, and all types of grass benefit from desiccation.

When the soil is frozen, moisture is not available to the roots, limiting a plant's ability to replace lost moisture. The foliage becomes dry, turns brown and may defoliate. This effect is referred to as winter burn. Applying an antidesiccant coats the leaves and needles, reducing transpiration. Depending on the length of cold weather in your area, one to two applications may be necessary. And be sure to apply anti-desiccants prior to freezing temperatures.

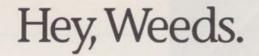
- · Spreader/Sticker for Pest Control Usage. Anti-desiccants also can be used as spreader/stickers with pesticides. Be sure to read label instructions carefully prior to application.
- loss and enhancing material applications, anti-desiccants also leave a sheen on treated leaves, ensuring a vital and healthy looking landscape. - Jerry Schoonmaker

· Aesthetics. Besides benefiting plants by reducing water



Anti-desiccants can be invaluable products for protecting trees and shrubs against a range of environmental ills when used correctly. Photo: Lawn Doctor

The author is staff horticulturist, The Lawn Doctor, Holmdel, N.J.



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USE READER SERVICE #17

Listen Up

Steve Pattie makes it a point to get to know his customers before a contract is ever signed. The president of The Pattie Group, Novelty, Ohio, sends his employees to new accounts armed with a three-page questionnaire used as a framework for building client profiles.

"We take about 45 minutes to sit down with a client for the first time and have a lengthy discussion," Pattie said. "There are some thought-provoking questions on there because there are specific things we're looking for."

Those specific details tend to be the clients' interests, expectations and, most importantly, their expected budget. Instead of simply having the client fill out the questionnaire, he has his employees review every question to stimulate response. Pattie trains his employees to listen carefully and pick up on what really gets clients fired up.

"They get tested on this," Pattie explained. Every questionnaire is peppered with these "hot-button" questions, slipped in among a detailed property description. The questions, centered around areas such as family information, current landscape service, plant and garden preferences, installation priorities and entertainment usage, can spark heated discussions about what clients really want from a landscape.

There's also adequate space to record a project's major details. The first page features a grid for the employee to sketch out details such as existing landscape features, utility lines, overhangs, shade areas and grades. Questions about screening, drainage and desired structures also can influence key parts of an installation early on.

Although questions about installation priority and phase budgets are slipped in near the bottom of the second page, clients are told the cost of their expectations up front to prevent misunderstandings, Pattie stressed.

"You're setting yourself up for disaster if you don't talk about prices early on, so you can't be afraid to bring it up," Pattie warned.

The questionnaire, which The Pattie Group has been using in some form for about 30 years, clears the air between the company and its new installation customers. Some people may think some questions are too personal or end up rejecting the estimate, but, Pattie said, the clients can't say the company wasn't listening. - Mandy Jenkins

The author is a Contributing Editor to Lawn & Landscape magazine and can be reached through nwisniewski@lawnandlandscape.com.



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Minding Your

PSS S

A Decent Proposal

If maintenance is your main course, don't forget to serve your clients the all-important appetizer – the proposal. A preliminary step in the sales procedure, this document gives clients a taste of your company's services and pricing and whets their palates for your scope of work before they, or you, commit to a contract.

"It is really the start of being profitable," pointed out Don Schlander, principal of Landscape Care, a commercial maintenance company in Phoenix, Ariz. And keeping it simple is the key.

"When clients give you criteria for a bid, you want to make them simple bullet points so they can see you included everything they asked for," Schlander noted, adding that his two-page proposal is actually the first portion of his service contract.

Here, the ingredients to stir up a successful proposal:

THE STAPLES. The flour and sugar of proposals are its services and prices. Schlander's first page lists core services and their specifications. Some of these line items

include turf care, fertilizing turf six times per year and postemergence applica-

tions as needed.

Note the detail - the form lists not just "fertilizing," but

"fertilizing six times per year." Spelling out specifics outlines what the proposal and price includes.

Schlander also positions a frequency of service statement on the first page, notifying clients that the service will occur on a weekly basis unless otherwise noted. Also included is basic background like the customer's name and address, the property name and areas for service.

The second page offers clients a menu of extra services to supplement core offerings. Customers can choose to add annual flowers, plantings or palm tree pruning, each with specific prices that are adjusted each season.

Payment terms describe the monthly billing cycle and when bills are due and a monthly investment section lists the exact price the customer will pay 12 times per year. Under the signature box, Schlander notes that the proposal is subject to change after 60 days and the maintenance contract can be terminated with a 30-day, written notice by either party.

"If I bid the project and they call me a year later, I want the opportunity to say that it was only good for 60 days because prices change, and you don't want to be locked into something that you did a year ago," Schlander reasoned.

THE ICING. These two pages present a concise message to potential clients, but mixing in some specialty fare will make your bid more appetizing. Schlander's proposal is just a small portion of the presentation. He prefaces it with a pictorial scope of work and resume, in that order.

"I want them to get a feel for the company first, and then I want them to know that I understand their property and I show them this pictorially and in written form," he described.

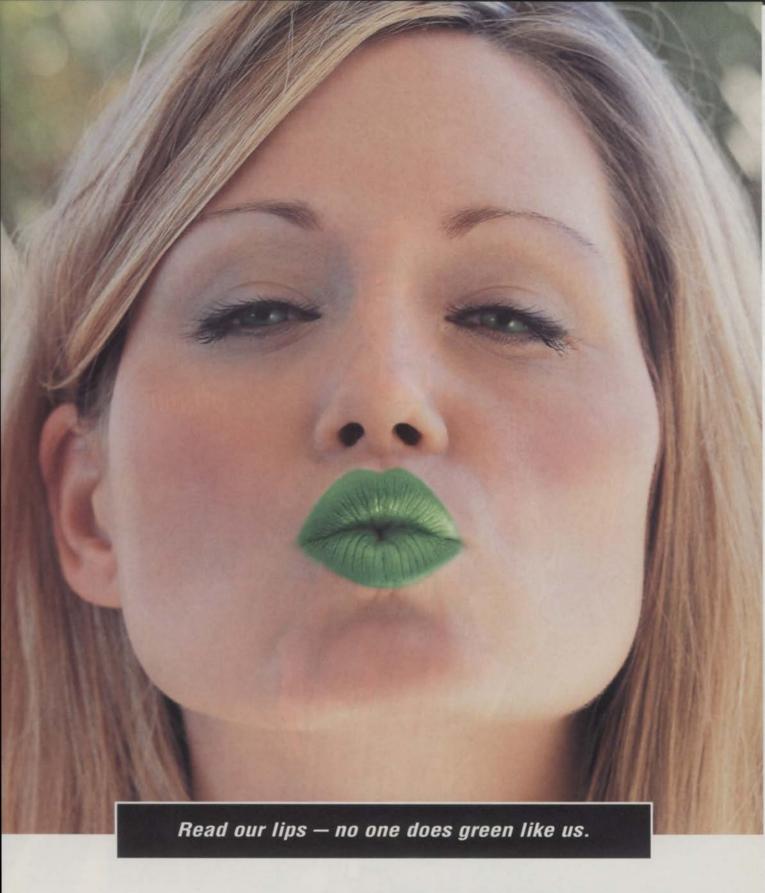
This progression leads potential clients through a visual tour of the company's experience, which positions Landscape Care as a professional organization. If Schlander is preparing a proposal for an especially large or prestigious commercial client, he will take digital pictures of the property and the areas he will work on and improve. "This gives them a feel that I understand the property and have researched it," he figured.

Finally, Landscape Care doesn't forget the dessert when creating proposals and follows up with each document once it earns a job and has worked on the property for a while. Checking the pricing against real numbers flags any necessary contract amendments so the company doesn't lose money on its services. "That is the last step, and it validates whether we are bidding right or wrong," Schlander explained.

Want to know how other contractors handle a particular business challenge? Ask us, and we'll find out. Send ideas for "Minding Your Business" topics to khampshire@lawnandlandscape.com or via fax at 216/961-0364.

The author is Managing Editor – Special Projects for Lawn & Landscape magazine.

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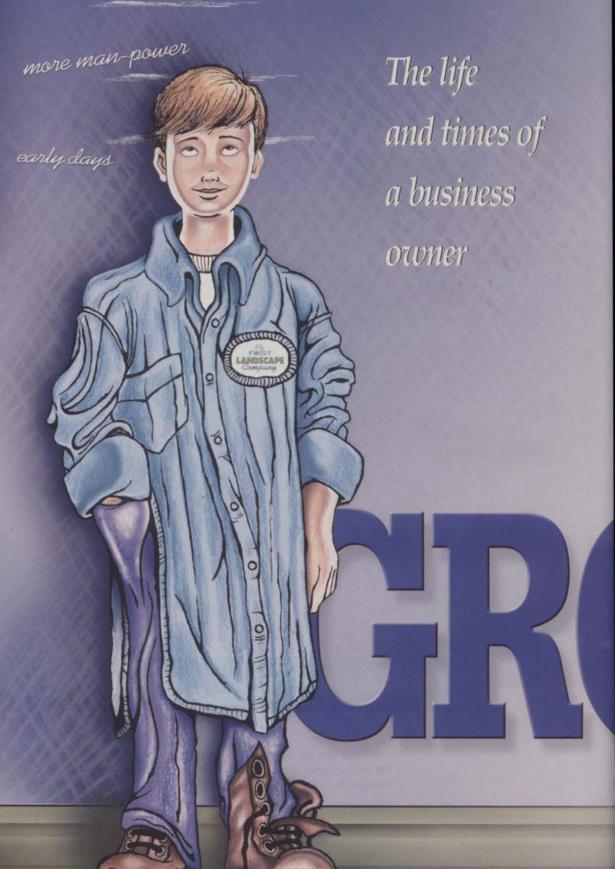
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the first million



by Kristen Hampshire

Entrepreneurs progress at different paces – their growth can't be charted with incremental, even marks. Time and experience push them to the next level.

There are awkward times and there are times when business sails without a ripple – those are the times that feed ambition and fuel a growth spurt. There are changing times, growing times, prosperous times and times when owners want to pull the covers over their heads and start over.

And in between all these times are growing pains. No one said business was easy.

Landscape companies and their owners inch up the entrepreneurial growth chart with each lesson, milestone, challenge and success. Experience puts another hair on the chest, notch in the belt or, perhaps, a wrinkle in the forehead. And as leaders age with distinct characteristics, we learn that each occupies a unique niche in their respective companies. No "owner" is the same.

Here, several green industry success stories remember their first steps and lessons learned, offering the business insight and advice they wish they knew years ago.

Landscape companies are born with a dream and thrive on dedication. They feed off of an entrepreneur's inspiration and grow from experience, reaching and passing though a business life cycle that starts, for most owners, as a one-man band.

"In the beginning, I was not unlike many landscape contractors," remembered Roger Braswell, president, Power House Equipment, Fort Mill, S.C., and former owner of Southern Tree. "I was not only selling the work, but I was also doing it and I was accounting for it. I was the seller, the doer and the tracker."

Braswell depended on one other employee, who held the trump card with a driver's license. This was

in 1968. Thirty years later, Braswell had matured and moved on from teenage owner of Braswell's Lawn & Landscape Co. to a founder of Landscape U.S.A., eventually settling into his current position as president of Power House Equipment.

With time and trust, he edged up the entrepreneurial ladder, passing on responsibilities to his co-workers as he explored new roles. Of course, this progression harbored a few bumps along the way, especially when it came time to trust and transfer responsibilities.

Delegation might be the most difficult task an owner confronts. "It was one of the hardest," Braswell agreed. "Maybe not just because you want to keep the



Cover Story

responsibility - that wasn't it so much. It was understanding the delegating process and having the maturity and the knowledge of how to delegate relative to defining the responsibilities pand having processes in place to hold people accountable and measure their achievements and results."

But part of growing is taking risks. And

making mistakes. But most of all, progress entails allowing other employees to "learn the hard way," as well.

"It's very hard to let others make decisions," admitted Russell Frith, chief operating officer, The Lawn Doctor, Holmdel, N.I. "But, it is one of the defining factors between those who have been in the business for 10 to 15 years with a constant volume and others who grow by some huge multiple."

Then comes a jolting reality: Owners don't need to work in their businesses, but they do need to work on them. "You're managing the managers, planning, and improving systems and pro-

cesses," Braswell described this final juncture. Of course, assuming a visionary role doesn't

happen overnight, and some owners find the stops on the way - the selling, doing or tracking - more adequately fit their strengths. Some don't want to forfeit time outside for hours at a desk, and others easily delegate production roles so they can handle business affairs. Moving through the ranks nourishes personal discovery, and as owners push their companies from small-time to million-dollar machines, they find their own niches.

"The most important role for the owner needs to be defined by the owner," remarked Dan Foley, president, D. Foley Landscape, (continued on page 39)

any business owners struggle with delegating responsibility to their employees. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

Systems - Establish a sales process and ensure a smooth transition from sales to production. Make sure the office is in order - accounting, routing and scheduling. Set a budget and business plan. Get systems on paper and into your computer.

Key Managers - Invest in your ambitious employees. Train and promote from within or recruit candidates to learn leadership positions. Offer advice; serve as a mentor. Most of all, trust them to make mistakes - take a chance and let them take ownership of key decisions.

Communicate - Keep an open door to suggestions and concerns. Communicate with managers and ensure they are passing down information to their crews. Finally, offer feedback and reward success - praise employees who meet goals.

- Kristen Hampshire

Delegation



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(continued from page 34)

Walpole, Mass. "The way to define that is to separate yourself from the business and do some dreaming on what the future should look like, and then work backwards."

THE HEAD COACH. Foley described a typical starting point, where his job description was "Jack of All Trades," and his mother was his office manager. "It was a hands-on approach," he recalled, noting the first two years while he worked and attended college were "a bit unique."

"I would estimate the work, procure the materials, lead the crews, help the crews – basically, I was in charge of just about everything, which is very typical," he said.

He calls this the "do-it-all stage."

The next step for Foley was finding a right-hand man to share the managerial re-

any owners stretch themselves before pausing for a structural reality check. Jean Seawright calls this reaching a plateau – a point where CEOs realize they have maxed out their strengths in an area and must hire others who excel these tasks to balance the business.

Some common signs? "Rapid heart beat, left arm pain." joked Roger Braswell, president, Power House Equipment, Fort Mill, S.C., and former owner of Southern Tree. Or, more likely, exhaustion from too many to-dos and not enough hours in the day.

"[The problem] for most people is that they try to take on everything," said Seawright, president, Seawright & Associates, a management consultant firm in Winter Park, Fla. "They oftentimes fail in one or more areas. And, if they don't, they end up with a heart attack. Or, they end up unhappy in their businesses."

Not sure if it's time to pass the baton? Check your blood pressure and see if Braswell's symptoms apply to you:

- · A line of people outside your office
- · A sense of always being behind and
- · Phone calls from clients
- Kristen Hampshire

Draw the Line

sponsibilities. Then, he added more managers trained for specialty work to oversee certain crews – operations managers. The company started as a landscape installation company that handled some maintenance work, but reinvented its focus to 100-percent commercial maintenance. Foley hired expertise in project management to execute the new focus.

When revenues hit close to \$400,000, Foley eased into his third stage, "when I didn't have just one person," he defined. "But I think the managers were still producers and operations people, too. They were still working in the field, they just had more responsibility."

Then, Foley shared more.

"The fourth phase for me was sharing the



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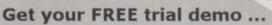
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accountability and streamlining the company from top to bottom," he noted. "We now have an account manager structure where the account manager is almost a small business unit within our structure."

As president, Foley supports three operations managers, two are account managers and one is a budget manager. These three "spokes" have dedicated crew leaders and departments. "This is where you have to start thinking structure," he pointed out.

Now, Foley still plays the sales manager role, but he has turned over new project sales to another employee. This was one of his most challenging moves. "It's hard to give up because there is nothing like telling the story of how you started and meeting people," he said. "But with the role of making sure the new infrastructure keeps up to speed, I had less and less time to make sales leads."

Foley calls himself the "head coach," and the hat fits. "I make sure the machine is built for speed and the sales manager has his foot on the gas pedal," he related. "Ultimately, I've moved further away [from day-to-day operations] because I realized you have to let people do their work."

THE PLANNER. Tom Fochtman skipped square one and launched CoCal Landscape in Denver, Colo., with a partner and a team of 13.

Before their business venture, he and Jesus Madrano both worked at large landscape companies, Madrano overseeing 100 employees at one point. "We had an attitude - let's get the work, then we'll figure out how to get it done," Fochtman said.

A typical day started at 5:30 or 6 a.m., when the two would get crews out the door. Then, Fochtman focused on selling and customers service while Madrano managed the field operations. At the end of the day, they were back in the office and Fochtman burned the midnight oil. "It was fun," he said. "We were building something. This was our future, and failing was not an option."

Cocal beat its half-million goal the first year and the second year it neared \$2 million in revenues - a new installation division boosting its business. But this service required careful attention and put Fochtman in the field, taking him out of the sales role he managed the first year. He was a night-time administrator and a day-time division manager, nerves stretched thin.

Cover Story

"What I do best is market and sell, and I can't do it if I'm doing construction," he noted. "We knew we needed to hire someone to manage that installation division. After that second year, we upgraded administration and we recruited a high-level operations manager for the landscape construction division. Those were the milestones."

But Fochtman's preference is planning. He didn't mind delegating roles to others. It meant more time to sell – more time to set goals and pursue opportunities. "The strategic planning and keeping the company focused and on track is more what I enjoy doing," he identified.

After delegating hands-on and adminis-

trative duties, playing owner is a bit easier, he found. "I don't come to work as early as I used to," he noticed. "Our team of people has grown so much that they are loyal and committed, and they've taken on responsibility that used to be on me or my partner, which allows me plan strategically."

THE MENTOR. Systems help owners slip out of certain roles in their businesses and into new ones. "Once you have the processes, it doesn't require the owner to implement them," Braswell noted.

But it does take an owner to create them.

Braswell knew he



Lawn & Landscape survey of nearly 500 business owners uncovered CEOs' growing pains. Three-quarters of the respondents reported their 2001 revenues were less than \$500,000, signifying a true sampling of entrepreneurs trying to push their operations to the next level. – Kristen Hampshire

What do you consider your first milestone?	
Hitting a certain revenue mark	36.8%
Adding a new service	32.9%
Hiring a partner or key managers to share responsibilities	21.4%
Other	8.9%

What is your primary limitation to growth?	
Lack of quality labor	48.2%
Lack of money	21.7%
Inability to sell more work	8.8%
Other	
Lack of a business plan with set goals	7.4%
Lack of effective systems	

What is the most difficult part about being a business owner?	
Juggling roles	32.7%
Delegating tasks - letting go of responsibility and trusting employees	32.3%
Time management	17.4%
Planning and budgeting	11.9%
Other	

How many hours do you work each week in the middle of the s	eason?
More than 65 hours	
60 to 65 hours	20.1%
55 to 60 hours	19.4%
40 to 45 hours	
50 to 55 hours	12.9%

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needed a smooth sales-production transition to ensure satisfied customers, and spelling out this process allowed him to ease out of these capacities. "We developed an operation manual that detailed every step of the process," he explained.

Other processes owners must implement include accounting, budgeting and scheduling. These procedures make the "risky business" of delegation less haphazard. "Get it on paper and in the computer," Braswell stressed.

Then, empower the right people to manage these duties – define accountable individuals who can execute these responsibilities. A strong managerial force can take over

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CHECK OUT this article online for more wise words from business owners. the helm while the owner charts the course.

"Decide what your values are and choose people whose values are in line with yours," Braswell suggested.

"No amount of systemizing things or training courses can take the place of employees having the opportunity to spend time with you, particularly if you are training them for leadership positions," he emphasized.

Clearly, people are Braswell's passion. He is a mentor, first and foremost—that's what makes him jive. It's different for everyone.

While the roles businesses owners fall into while building their companies lead them to different heights and positions, perhaps the most rewarding rite of passage for entrepreneurs is the chance to see what they started with – the dream – come true.

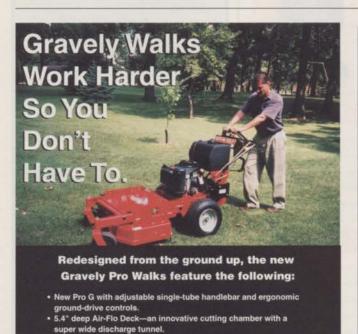
"That's what I love about business," Braswell confirmed. "Getting an idea, seeing what it's going to look like and at some point down the road, opening your eyes and there in reality is what you saw in your dreams."

Lessons LEARNED

Success involves a learning curve, and most business owners admit the sound advice they offer today originates from mistakes they made yesterday.

People First. Roger Braswell knows that people are more important than projects. But this isn't so easy to remember when the schedule is packed, labor is tight and customers expect results – fast. "When you're in the fray, when you're out there trying to build and save and grow the business, you get so focused on all the projects and profit centers that you sometimes forget

(continued on page 44)



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Cover Story

(continued from page 42)

about the people – developing the people, training the people, caring about the people," admitted the president of Power House Equipment, Fort Mill, S.C., and former owner of Southern Tree.

This reality shook Braswell the day one of his managers, a close friend, was killed in an accident on a job site. "It really came home," he recalled quietly. "It involved a piece of equipment and an error in judgment. It was a Friday afternoon, and he was out there with his team wrapping up the job.

"It really makes you see what is the most important thing about your business, and that is taking care of those people and enjoying them," he emphasized.

Step Aside. Doling out roles and responsibilities is difficult, but stepping out of a management role can feel like giving up "your baby." Sometimes, businesses experience rebirth under new direction. Once the owner lets go of the leash, employees open

up with innovative suggestions that renew the organization, said Jean Seawright, president, Seawright & Associates, a human resources consulting firm in Winter Park, Fla.

"Iknew an owner that was very structured, detail-oriented and obsessed with everything being exactly the way he wanted it," Seawright shared. "He took his company to a point where it plateaued and he wasn't going anywhere, and he didn't understand why."

The owner's management style inhibited employees from sharing ideas. So, Seawright prescribed a new general manager for the company to accelerate its growth. Together, she and the owner searched for a candidate with a fresh perspective who fit the culture. Once they located a "replacement," the owner assumed public relations and marketing responsibilities.

"When the owner stepped out of this role, people began to make suggestions and get more involved," she noted. "The company moved to a new level in business."

onsider these practical pointers passed down from business owners who worked their way up the growth chart, albeit with a few aches and pains.

Communicate — "It's easy to communicate when you are a one- or two-man company, or even when you have that one key person. But when you start distributing accountability among managers, one of the roles of the owner is now to make sure communication is happening promptly and correctly." — Dan Foley

Delegate decisions – "For someone like myself, a big part of the struggle is to try to stay out of things. What appears to be the easy answer is to jump in, but by jumping in, you deprive people of the opportunity to be measured and to make decisions and mistakes. And remember, if someone doesn't make some mistakes, they are probably not making many decisions either." – Russell Frith

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Delegation Delegation S

It took Mike Russo awhile to figure out that people – not equipment – were his greatest assets.

As a result, Russo, president, Russo Lawn & Landscape, Windsor Locks, Conn., spent the early 1990s "going through" employees. "Few people would stay for more than one season and I wasn't able to delegate anything," he said. "I was narrow-minded when it came to thinking about employees' roles."

Then, Russo started paying attention to what other landscape companies around him were doing. He attended trade shows and joined associations to learn from his peers. For Russo, the experience was an awakening.

"Today, most people running businesses seem to complain about how hard it is to find good help," Russo said. "What I learned is that it takes out-of-the-box thinking and creativity to attract and grow the right team. Good help is out there – we just have to find it and develop it."



Growth takes creative thinking, according to company President Mike Russo (far right).

Joining Russo from left: Director of Operations Mark Stupcenski and client Steve Howlett

STARTING OUT. During its beginnings, Russo Lawn & Landscape maintained mostly residential clients' land-

scapes, but today the company services primarily commercial customers, such as hotels, condominium associations, office/corporate sites and airport facilities.

Russo broke into commercial work in 1992, "A

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Russo Lawn &

Landscape

hotel was being built in the area and I knocked on the door once a week for about a year," Russo said. By the time the project was finished, he had developed a relationship with the client and that became his first commercial job.

Although, after building more commercial work six years ago, Russo now admits that he is tempted to get back into the residential market. "Many contractors in this area don't think that there is any money in residential work – not high-end, but right in the middle," he said. "If they already pay a part-timer \$40 or \$50 to mow and another company to fertilize, we could do that in addition to providing them with more services and build loyal clients."

The only factor holding Russo back is a lack of people trained to handle residential work. "We're so busy with commercial work, I actually subcontract residential work out if I handle it at all," he pointed out. "The crew set-up we have now fits more for larger accounts – up to 10 to 12 acres. They are used to the mindset of a bigger job. One of our guys who's been with us awhile could make an awe-some foreman on a residential two-man crew. We are about four to six months away from developing a solid second person for this crew."

On his commercial maintenance accounts, Russo prefers a two-man crew because each employee is held to higher accountability standards to finish work and increase productivity. "If it takes a two-man crew four-and-one-half hours to

(continued on page 50)

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First Look

(continued from page 48)

do the work, it'll take a three-man crew the same," he said. "The trick is if you put more people on a crew, you have to have a stronger leader to keep everyone motivated. With a two-man crew, the foreman, who usually has the best eye for detail, has to complete at least half of the work. On some of the larger sites, two crews will team up and split the work."

The company's service mix is 70 percent maintenance, 20 percent installation and 10 percent snow removal. "Offering complete site management has been an approach we have used to attract and retain commercial clients," Russo said. "We want the client to make only one phone call – to us – for anything related to the exterior of their facility."

RETENTION RULES. For Russo, delegating responsibilities and seeing "the big picture" is the most challenging part of the job. "Finding clients is what we had focused on, but that was only two-thirds of the puzzle," he said. "The other third was finding, training and retaining employees and we were not spending enough time on this."

About four years ago, Russo realized he had enough negative issues with employees and he had to do something about it.

For instance, losing money from controllable equipment and property damage was something employees could help him with. Inspired by the popular television program, Survivor, Russo's Survivor Program teaches employees the different between controllable and uncontrollable damage and rewards them for limiting the controllable sort.

"A blower falling off of a trailer is controllable because it should have been strapped down tighter," Russo explained. "When a belt breaks or wears out, that's uncontrollable, but if the engine seizes because you didn't check the oil, that's controllable. I felt that my team was capable of learning this and I wanted to reward them for making good decisions."

Russo budgets \$1,000 each month to this program, which runs from April through November. Employees are given certificates at the beginning of each month that are used to keep track of monthly controllable and uncontrollable equipment and property damage. The certificates are redeemable at the end of each month after controllable damage repair costs are subtracted from the total amount. Employees receive incentives based on his or her level of equipment usage (i.e. an employee who doesn't have much interaction with equipment on a daily basis will receive a smaller percentage than an employee who does).

"It definitely makes them more aware of how they are using the equipment," Russo enthused. "The best part is that I don't get upset over equipment damages anymore. Instead, employees are razzing each other about it because they know that's money taken away from what they can earn."

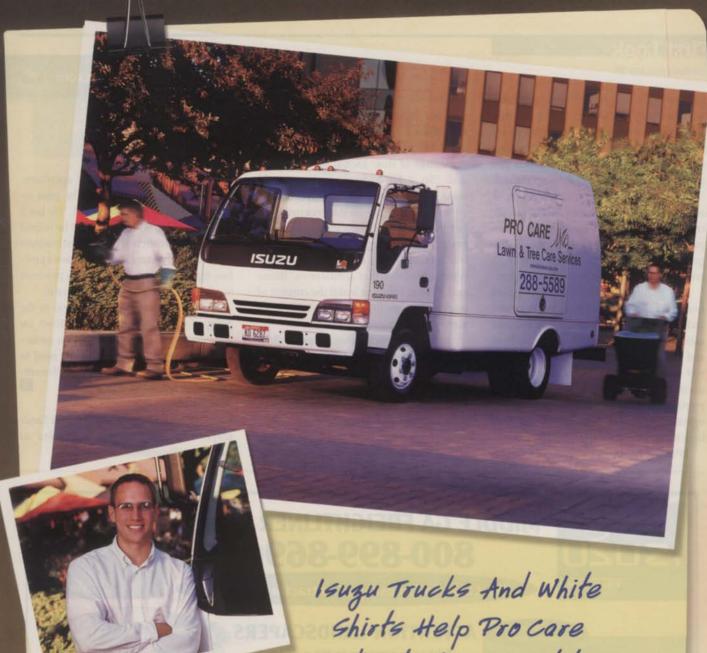
Another problem for Russo was attendance, which is crucial to landscape scheduling. To alleviate this issue, Russo started Wellness Time, the opposite of customary

(continued on page 52)



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Kevin Allen, Co-owner of Pro Care Landscape Management, believes that image is very important. So to add to their image, his employees wear white, button-down Oxford shirts and drive Isuzu trucks. Kevin says, "We like to stand apart, to look professional. Our Isugu trucks are serious vehicles, not like the small pick-ups that most guys use." the notes, "In addition to looking good, Isuzu trucks have real benefits in terms of utility. They can carry both liquid and dry product in the same truck, giving us a lot more flexibility in the field and less time wasted making extra trips. And they can easily u-turn on narrow residential streets." Would you like your business to blossom? call (800) 185-5445 ext. 2360 or visit www.isuzuev.com

First Look

(continued from page 50)

sick time. The program encourages perfect attendance by rewarding employees who have perfect weekly attendance with an extra half-hour of pay. "So, if you have perfect attendance for 40 weeks during the year you earn 20 extra hours of pay," Russo explained.

Now that attendance and equipment issues were improving, Russo decided to encourage employees to contribute to company growth with a Pay for Performance Program that rewards them with bonuses based on the business' annual profit percentage.

The company kicked off the program four years ago with open book management and training classes to teach employees about sales, direct costs, indirect costs, overhead and profit. "Foremen are now aware of indirect time and how it affects profits – they understand the importance of scheduling and preparation," Russo enthused. "And mower operators are aware of equipment costs and how important routine maintenance is."

With the program, bonuses are tied to a

minimum company profit goal. "If we exceed our minimum profit goal – we typically shoot for more than 10 percent – bonuses are paid to employees based on a percentage of their annual salary," Russo said. "So, a \$10-an-hour employee could make a \$700 or \$800 bonus."

Still, a challenge with this program is the fact that some of Russo's employees don't grasp the annual goal concept. "We have learned that weekly and monthly goals are better understood than annual ones," Russo said. "We're trying to instill the concept of working smarter in less time to make more money than working overtime."

As Russo learns to delegate responsibilities, employees start to buy in to some of these programs more quickly because others who are moving up into management-type roles aid Russo in spreading the company message and educating employees.

Four years ago, when the company was at \$600,000 in revenue, Mark Stupcenski,

lawnandlandscape.com



Check out this article online for more of Russo's employee programs.

now the company's director of operations, started working with Russo. "The guys instantly looked up to him," he said. "He has a way of working with people and he helped the guys learn different facets of the business without overreacting like I do. He sees a problem, figures out a solution, and then proceeds to educate the crew on how to solve it.

"I want to develop my business to the point of operating without my direct involvement on a daily basis," Russo continued. "I've come to realize that the need to delegate is critical. Learning and implementing the process is the challenge."

The author is Managing Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine and can be reached at nwisniewski@lawnandlandscape.com.



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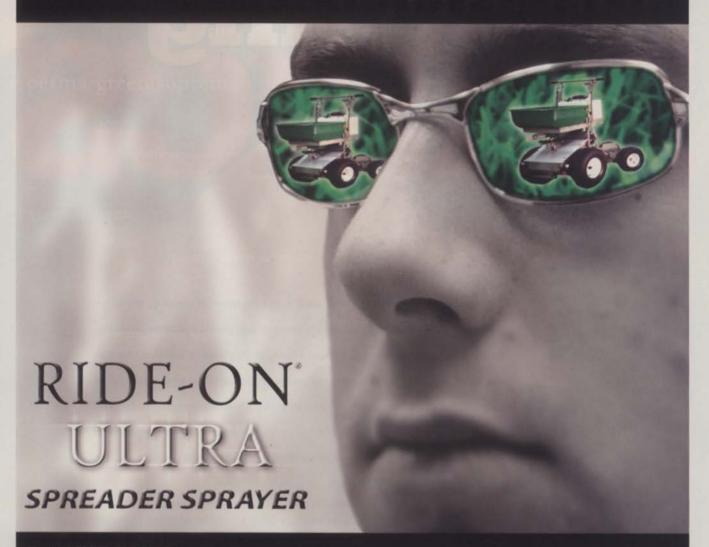
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by Keoin Kehoe

Budgeting BASICS

Financial
planning is a
critical
element to
managing
growth
successfully.

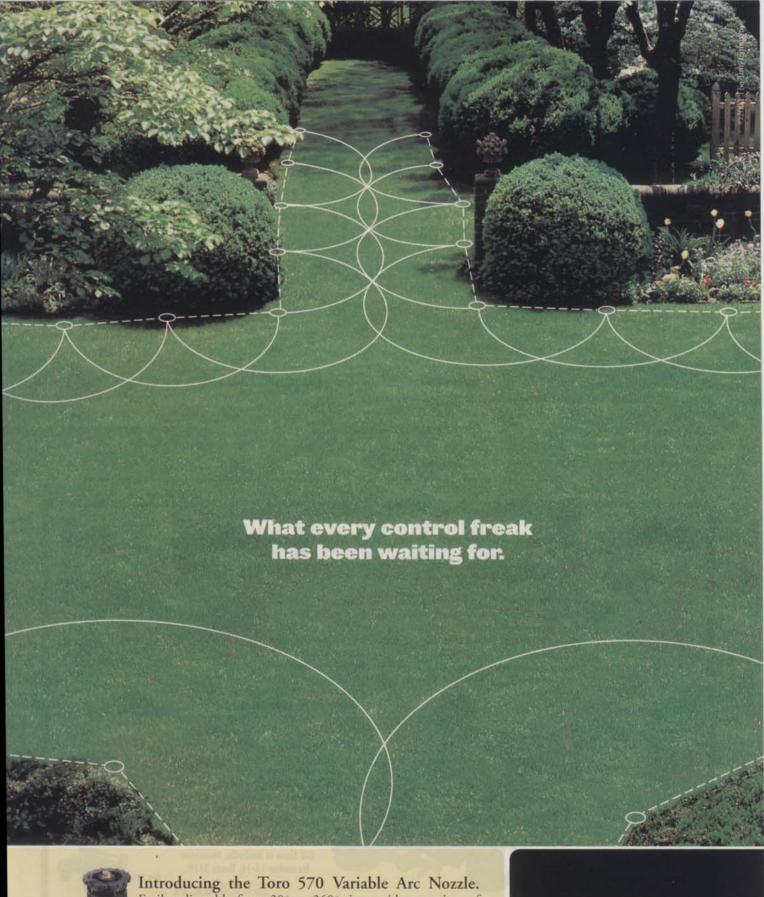
Financial planning, combined with market and organization planning, provide a business owner with the tools and checkpoints to control growth and optimize profits. Smaller companies can succeed without a financial plan because they don't have as much risk associated with a larger fixed overhead and large asset replacement. They can often run a business on more of a cash in/cash out basis where money in the bank means that everything is OK. This same approach will cause larger companies to grow "out of control" because for larger companies the money in the bank may not be enough to meet the varied needs of a growing business.

There are three steps businesses must focus on to obtain financial discipline: Determine a minimum profit requirement, establish a capital spending limit and create a maximum production hour budget.

MINIMUM PROFIT. The first step in financial planning is to establish a minimum profit, which is netted after the owner's salary. In other words, the net profit reflects the fact that the owner manager is already paying him or herself a fair salary. If this is not the case and the owner is taking all compensation as a draw, then the minimum profit calculation must also include a salary calculation. The example we use in this article assumes the owner is paid a fair salary. Minimum profit is based on earning enough profit to pay for asset reinvestment, asset replacement, debt retirement and dividend payment.

If a landscape contractor takes a draw, here's a method for determining a fair pay rate. The owner/manager should be paid at a fair market rate, which is the rate you would have to pay anyone else to do the same job. One of the missing disciplines in many small businesses is a true picture of the business' cost structure. Since pricing decisions are based on cost recovery, the absence of owner/manager salary in the profit-and-loss statement means that most small businesses are underpricing to some

(continued on page 56)





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Building a Budget

(continued from page 54)

extent because the owner works for "free." In this case, the owner wears all hats – sales, operations and administration.

The day does eventually come when one of these functions is hired out – and those new hires don't work for free. This is the first place profits slip away during growth – added costs and a price structure built upon free management. Contractors should have the financial discipline to pay themselves a salary the day they start the business.

What is a fair market rate? A simple sliding scale works best for contractors to determine a fair pay rate. The sliding scale is based on the determining owner/manager's salary as a percentage of sales. Table 1 (right) shows that the owner/manager of a \$5-million company is receiving fair compensation at about a rate of 2 percent of sales or \$100,000. This pay scale comes before management perks. The owner/manager of a \$1-million dollar company is receiving fair compensation

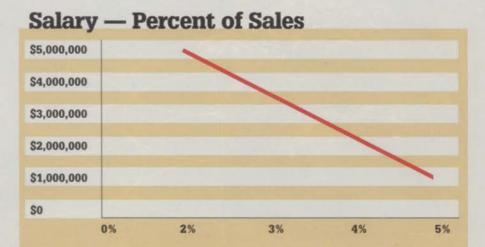
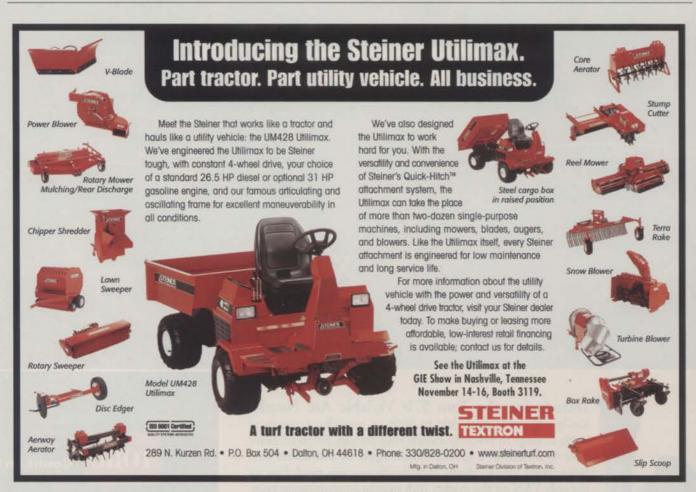


TABLE 1

at about a rate of 5 percent of sales or \$50,000 per year.

ASSET & DEBT. The business must generate enough profit every year to buy new stuff, replace worn out stuff, and pay off the

debt used to buy stuff. The company must target profit levels to pay for these items. In the absence of discipline, two things may happen. First, contractors may over invest, spending too much for the level of sales and, as a (continued on page 58)



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Minimize Mowing & Clippings with Controlled-Release Nitrogen

Richard Guzman realized there was something missing in home lawn care services that golf courses had always provided: topdressing. So he started his own business in 1998 offering deep core aeration and topdressing to homeowners and sport fields in the Atlanta area.

"Traditionally, lawn care companies just mow, fertilize and water," says Guzman, owner of Sandman Topdressing and Aerating, Inc. of Hoschton, Georgia. "When you add deep core aeration plus topdressing, all of a sudden the lawn looks phenomenally better. Our topdressing is mostly sand with about 10% organic compost."

While Sandman's customers enjoy their thicker, plusher lawns, they often complained that the grass color faded a month or so after topdressing. "Our Southern turfgrasses require more nitrogen than bluegrass and other northern turf," explains Guzman. "We knew we could put down straight nitrogen and get green grass, but didn't want to bring on a surge of growth and get excessive clippings and added thatch."

A year ago, Sandman was searching for the best fertilization solution for its patented Sandman Application System® when the company discovered Nitroform®

Controlled Release Nitrogen from Nu-Gro Technologies, Inc. Nitroform contains more than two-thirds water insoluble nitrogen, providing extended nitrogen release for 8–12 months. Unlike other nitrogen sources, Nitroform has a 1:1 ratio of nitrogen to carbon. When microorganisms break down the nitrogen in Nitroform, carbon is used as an energy source for microbes. An increased microorganism population results in healthier turfgrass.

Cut More Leaf, Less Stem... "Nitroform constantly releases small amounts of nitrogen so the turf stays green and never goes hungry," Guzman notes. "Once we started applying Nitroform, our customers' lawns and sport fields were near perfect all summer long. We found people were mowing less often – cutting more leaf and less stem when mowing. Nitroform is transforming our business dramatically for our customers and franchise operations."

Sandman continually educates its customers about the benefits of controlled-release nitrogen. They tell them that excess clippings and surges of growth are real negatives. "We promote returning the clippings to the soil," says Guzman. "By removing the clippings, you're losing 30% of your fertilization. Just mowing and leaving clippings where they lay is the best thing for the turf. By promoting controlled growth, you mow less often, compared to every other day with fast–growing lawns."

Sandman crews topdress throughout the growing season, from mid-March through the end of October. They first deep core aerate, then apply Nitroform at the rate of 200 to 300 pounds per acre, then topdress and drag the material into the soil with Sandman's patented drag-mat screeds.

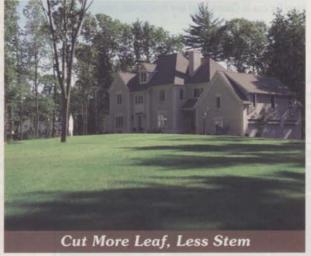
"Topdressing eliminates thatch, helps percolation, increases the efficiency of fertilizer intake, reduces moisture requirements and develops a healthier root zone," explains Guzman. "Nitroform encourages organic matter and promotes controlled leaf growth. Our customers notice the difference two months and beyond because there's no drop off in feeding, no surge of growth and fewer clippings."

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Nutralene provides nitrogen nutrition lasting from 12-16 weeks. It contains 14.5% water insoluble nitrogen, and releases nitrogen both by hydrolysis and through microbial activity. This dual-release of Nutralene provides a two-fold advantage: hydrolysis releases nitrogen quickly, giving plants a boost at the beginning of the growing season, then microbial activity releases nitrogen more slowly through the rest of the season.

"Many homeowners spend time and money mowing much more often than necessary," says Guzman. "They can fill up 20 bags of clippings from a 5,000 square-foot lawn. They spend time filling up the bags and then have to dispose of them, too. By mowing less, they save time, use less fuel and put less wear and tear on their equipment. The best part is they also have a more beautiful, deep green lawn."





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Building a Budget

(continued from page 56)

result, see interest payments diminish profits. Second, contractors may under-invest, and see profits disappear as a result of reduced productivity, which happens due to field inefficiencies or poor or absent equipment.

The tables below provide an example of the calculation used to determine the minimum profit to pay for these items. In Table 2, a company with sales of \$1 million has a growth rate of 10 percent per year. This same company boasts an asset turnover ratio of 4.0. (Calculate asset turnover ratio by dividing annual sales by the total assets from the balance sheet. An asset turnover ratio of 4.0 is a fair representation of the industry average.) Total assets, therefore, are \$250,000 (\$1 million in sales divided by 4.0 turnover rate).

Total assets include current and fixed assets. Current assets are primarily accounts receivable. Fixed assets represent "stuff" primarily equipment. Using an industry average of 8.0 for current asset turnover, calculate current assets of \$125,000 (\$1 million in sales divided by 8.0 turnover rate). A current asset turnover of 8.0 is the same as saying a contractor's typical receivables collection period is 45 days on average. Finally, determine fixed assets by subtracting current assets from total assets to yield \$125,000 in fixed assets. This represents a snapshot of the business before it grows.

Sales	\$1,000,000
Growth Rate	10%
Asset Turnover	4.0
Total Assets	\$250,000
Current Asset Turns	8.0
Current Assets	\$125,000
Fixed Assets	\$125,000

TABLE 2

Now, turn to the 10-percent growth rate to calculate the asset reinvestment, replacement and debt retirement needs. The 10percent growth rate increases sales to \$1.1 million next year. Of course, this will require additional assets to manage the new sales as well as replace worn equipment.

First, apply the same asset turnover ratio of 4.0 to calculate the new total assets. The result is \$275,000. Again, apply the same current asset turnover of 8.0 to arrive at

58



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Building a Budget

(continued from page 58)

\$137,500 in new current assets. The same calculation we used before allows us to determine the new fixed assets base to support growth. In this example it is \$137,500. Thus, fixed assets have increased by \$12,500. In other words, the business needs \$12,500 reinvestment dollars to keep up with the sales growth. (Table 3)

Sales Growth	\$1,100,000
Asset Turnover	4.0
Total Assets	\$275,000
Current Asset Turns	8.0
Current Assets	\$137,500
Fixed Assets	\$137,500
Reinvestment Dolla	rs \$12,500

TABLE 3

Next, turn to the replacement dollars calculation. Start by making an assumption about the useful lifespan of the fixed assets. Using an industry average of six years, divided the original \$125,000 in fixed assets by the six years fixed asset life span. This amounts to \$20,833. (Table 4)

This profit calculation must be done even if a contractor is not planning to replace any equipment in the current year, because eventually he or she will need to replace something, and one doesn't want to have to earn all that profit in one year to replace something that is good for six years. The goal is to make profit now to replace stuff when it's necessary later. This is profit "put away" in

a sense for the time it is needed, like when that truck breaks down on Friday afternoon in early June and a new one is needed.

Fixed	Asset	Life	Span			6
Repla	ceme	nt I	ollar	s	\$20,8	33

TABLE 4

Finally, the plan calls for debt retirement, so interest expenses do not consume future profits. (Table 5) Start by using the Associated Landscape Contractors of America Cost Study debt percent average of 50 percent for the debt/equity ratio. Since total assets are \$250,000, debt must be \$125,000 or 50 percent of total assets. Likewise, since debt plus equity must equal total assets, equity is \$125,000. If a contractor retires 10 percent of the debt, he or she will need to generate enough profit for debt retirement dollars of \$12,500 (note debt times debt retirement rate).

Debt Percent	50%
Debt	\$125,000
Equity	\$125,000
Retirement Rate	10%
Debt Retirement Do	

TABLE 5

Now, the calculation for the minimum profit to reinvest, replace and retire debt is the sum of the totals from Tables 3 through 5 (above) or \$45,833. This is the money that must be made to keep the business healthy and in a controlled growth mode.

Total Reinvest/ Replace/Retire \$45,833

TABLE 6

However, the minimum profit calculation is not finished. Contractors need to make profit for one more item – the dividend payment. The dividend is payment to the owner that represents a fair return on the money – or equity – invested. We've already calculated equity at \$125,000. Based on industry average, the required return on equity should be 20 percent (at a minimum). Equity multiplied by return on equity yields a dividend payment of \$25,000. The minimum profit for this business is the dividend payment plus the total reinvest/replace/retire requirement, which is \$70,833.

Equity \$125,00	0
Return in Equity 20	%
Dividend Payment \$25,00	0

TABLE 7

Now, to set up a budget, contractors need the top line revenue goal and the bottom line minimum profit. The budget will require that all other costs – staffing and overhead, primarily – fit between these two numbers. Table 8 (page 62) shows that the \$1.1-million company in the example must make \$70,833 in net profit before taxes or earn money at a rate of a 6.4 percent bottom line (minimum).

(continued on page 62)

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power-to-weight ratio, Chuck's crews can run longer and faster with the FS 250 than with anything else. As Chuck says, "When you're waist-deep in swamp, cutting sawgrass and snakes, your trimmer better be the best there is."

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Building a Budget

(continued from page 60)

Total Revenues \$1,100,000 Minimum Profit \$70,833 Profit Margin 6.4%

TABLE 8

CAPITAL SPENDING. Everybody wants more stuff. Employees have an unquenchable need for more, bigger and better stuff. This is fine as long as the business is making profits in excess of 15 percent and can afford it. But it doesn't work as well for 90 percent of the companies in the industry who are earning fewer than 12 percent. So it makes sense to establish upper and lower capital spending control limits to manage purchases in line with a growth rate. Let's review a calculation to develop these upper and lower control limits referring to the same example used earlier.

Minimum capital spending is the sum of the reinvestment dollars and the replacement dollars spent for one year of fixed asset use. Contractors can limit spending to this

amount of money just to invest on a year-by-year basis. However, fixed assets are not purchased for a year at a time, they are purchased for six

years of use. Remember the six-year asset life span introduced earlier? In fact, most fixed asset purchases are not made in a smooth year-to-year fashion. They are made unequally in fewer, larger purchases. Therefore, we can establish the maximum budget by determining the cost of buying all the fixed assets now for the next six years. This upper limit is calculated as the replacement dollars plus six times the reinvestment dollars. This calculation yields a maximum capital spending budget of \$95,833. It's helpful for long-term planning that if you spend the minimum this year, you may spend the maximum next year or the year after and vice-versa (see Table 9, above right).

Now, you have two tools and checkpoints to provide financial discipline for growth. These tools and checkpoints help

Reinvestment Dollars	\$12,500
Replacement Dollars	\$20,833
Minimum Capital Spending	\$33,333
Fixed Asset Life	6
Maximum Capital Spending	\$ 95,833

TABLE 9

control growth. If you are overspending on capital and under-earning in profits, growth can become painfully out of control. I have seen companies ignore these basic disciplines and pay the price later on when they end up contracting to pay down accumulated debt and reduce high overhead. It is never fun to peel back, and it can be a backward step that takes years from which to recover.

The author is president, KehoeGuido Consulting, Laguna Niguel, Calif., and can be reached at 949/ 715-3804 or info@kehoeandco.com. This is part two of a two-part series on growth and budgeting. Part one, which was featured in the October 2002 issue covered organization and market position. Kehoe also will share tips on calculating and managing production and labor hours in the February 2003 issue of Lawn & Landscape.



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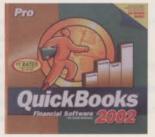
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Grass Clippings

by Kristen Hampshire

How do you handle your trimmings?
Contractors in various regions discuss their preferences to bag or not to bag.

Bag it or leave it, grass clippings are a maintenance fact of life.

You can't have a primped property without grassy, green leftovers – and, you can't find a contractor who prefers to "just bag it" without running across one who would rather "let it be."

The two camps have their reasons. Baggers say the neat finish pleases homeowners who don't want to track grass clods into their homes or find clippings clinging to their window screens. The Grasscyclers, we'll call them, figure the nutritive benefits of leaving clippings on a property reduce fertilization needs, increase turf nitrogen content and simply save them time and money.

Others subscribe to both schools of thought.

Take Ray Pelletier, who belonged to the bagging bunch before several years ago when the city of Naples, Fla., banned landscape contractors from dumping their green waste in local landfills. He changed his equipment – swapping bagging mowers for deep-decked zero turns – and he open trailers for enclosed versions, wouldn't need extra space to haul clippings to

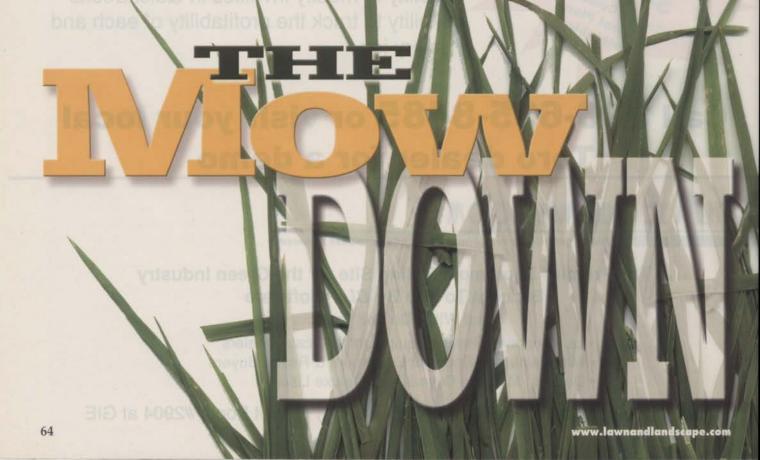
the dump. And in the end, Ray's Lawn & Garden generated 20 to 30 percent less waste each year.

"As a homeowner, I would much rather have them picked up, but environmentally, it is better that we leave them where they are," Pelletier reasoned. "Ithink we've all accepted it like a tax increase," he compared. "You pay it and follow the rules and regulations."

GOING GREEN. Baggers beware. Coming soon to a neighborhood near you could be municipal restrictions that enforce a message initiated in the early 1990s. "Don't Bag It," they called it in Texas, illustrating the agenda with a picture of a bag with a line through it, described Tom Delaney, executive vice president, Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA), Marietta, Ga.

Today, more local governments are prohibiting green waste disposal in landfills, and contractors in these regions are shifting their maintenance practices to cooperate.

"There are a good numbans on yard waste, so there will be more contractors who Grasscycle and don't (continued on page 68) ber of states that have



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Grass Clippings

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go to the trouble of bagging the clippings and composting them," Delaney noted, adding that PLCAA coined the decade-old Grasscycling term for a positive spin.

Since then, grass clippings have taken the back seat to more hot-button issues like prenotification and emissions efforts, Delaney said, but, still, some communities are examining how contractors handle green debris.

Even without restrictions, Mark Harris leaves clippings. Customers don't mind – "their primary interest is curb appeal" – and he figures he saves on fertilizer since the coated clippings stay on the turf. "Basically,

you are putting nutrients in the blades," related the president of Harris Landscape, Houston, Texas.

Ecological benefits dominate the clippings case, Delaney pointed out. "Grasscycling is about the natural process of decay and renewal," he defined. "Clippings are 85 percent water, so they decompose fast, returning 20 percent of their nitrogen content to the lawn.

"Some people actually think that by Grasscycling through the whole mowing period that you might add a whole pound of nitrogen to the property," he added.

And contractors don't have to compromise a clean look if they leave their clippings (continued on page 70)

rasscycling is naturally recycling grass clippings by leaving them on the lawn after mowing. Coined in the early 1990s by the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA), the method conserves landfill capacity by reducing green waste. Here, the association debunks some common myths:

Grasscycling does not cause thatch buildup in the lawn. An 11-year study at the United States Department of Agriculture station in Beltsville, Md., showed that thatch is composed primarily of grass roots, not clippings. Clippings left on the lawn decay quickly and release valuable nutrients back into established grass.

Grasscycling does not spread lawn diseases. Watering, fertilization and sharp mower blades have a greater influence on disease occurrence.

Grasscycling can be done with any lawn mower. No special equipment is necessary for Grasscycling, however, many manufacturers have attachments that improve your mower's performance.

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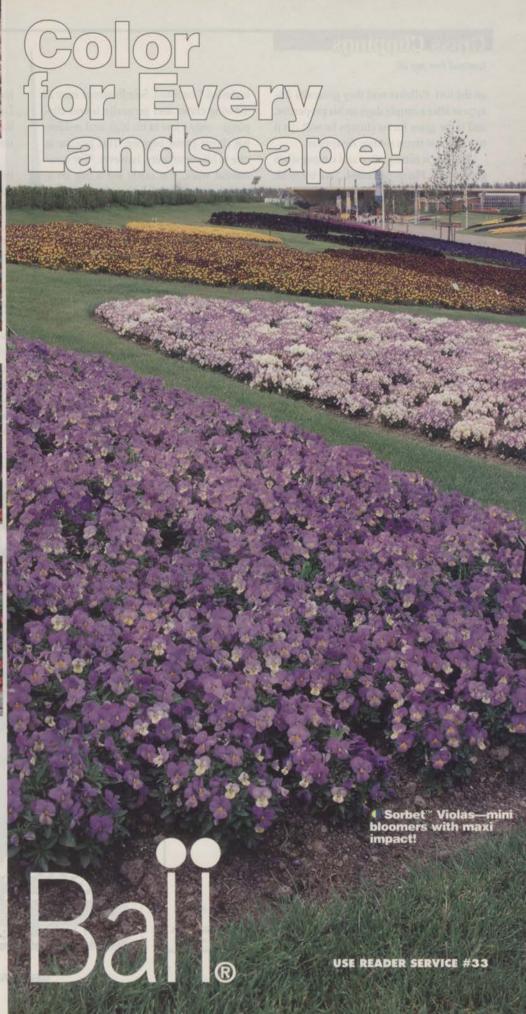
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Grass Clippings

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on the turf. Pelletier said they generally disappear after a couple days on his properties, and if the grass forms clumps he will cut it two or three times so they disappear.

The key is cutting often and cutting when grass is dry, Harris reminded. "We try to hit our mowing frequency on time so we aren't mowing the grass when it is really high," he said, noting his weekly mowing schedule. When he sees sod clods, he might take a blower to disperse the clippings for a finished look.

Besides, Pelletier noted that even though longer grass requires a double cut, the time spent evening out clippings outweighs the man-hours necessary to bag, load and transport debris to a dumping site.

In fact, this laborious process might take up to a quarter to a third more time, estimated Lance Schelhammer, president, Grass Roots, Lenexa, Kan. "And it is not only the time spent on the property, but the time disposing of all the clippings and cleaning up the trucks when they get back to the shop – that's all

included," he listed. Schelhammer runs 20 mowing crews and generally leaves clippings – only a few of his high-end residential clients prefer bagging. This practice is rare in his community, however. "For commercial work, you rarely see a bag on a mower around here," he noted.

But Schelhammer usually suggests leaving clippings when his clients ask. "It is better for the lawn, and we found that bagging can create a bit of thatch, and leaving the clippings provides the lawn with better nutrients," he observed.

He can tell simply by looking at the turf. "It's strange – you can definitely see the difference," Schelhammer remarked. "Generally, the lawns that we leave the clippings on look healthier."

IN THE BAG. Jim Minkler bags his clients' clippings – always has. The end results keep the customers content and the turf tidy, he claims. "Aesthetically, it

looks better," said the president of Minkler's Lawn Care, Mauldin, S.C. "They like the look of it vs. having ground-up turf that is not as appealing to them."

Besides, 60 percent of his customers have irrigation systems, so their grass grows quite quickly, Minkler noted. "If I were to shoot their grass [out of the mower], even mowing at a high height, it would look terrible because there would be so much grass since it grows so fast," he argued.

These preferences explain why Minkler fought a proposed bagging ban for 10 months before the city of Mauldin dropped the idea.

"The city was already picking up bags [of leaves and clippings] and the residents are getting charged for it, but they wanted to stop us from putting out bags of grass," he said. "They wanted us to haul everything off to a county dump where it is free, but the pain is that most [contractors] don't have room for it [in their vehicles]."

(continued on page 72)



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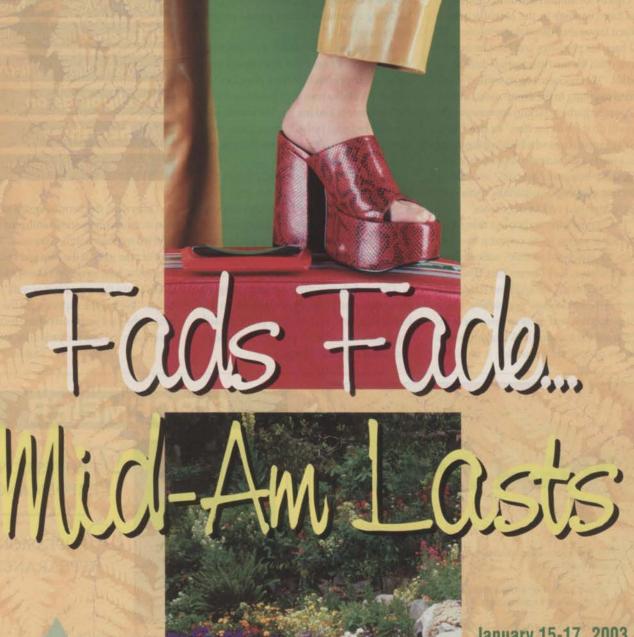
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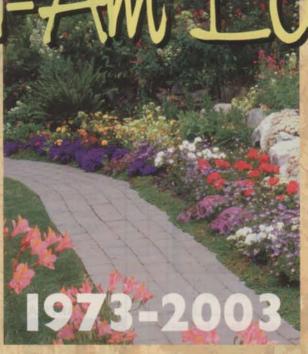
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(continued from page 70)

Luckily for Minkler and other contractors who bag clippings in the Mauldin area, a lawsuit threat shut down the restriction. He still bags his clippings and now he doesn't have to plan the time to transport them to the landfill. "We choose to bag so we don't have to haul anything to the dump since customers have the garbage pickup anyway and the city will do it for us for free," he described.

Many contractors who bag clippings must plan a trip to a municipal composting facility or landfill, however. But, still, some favor collecting clippings - especially those who cater to high-end residential clients.

"Percentage wise, we bag less than 5 percent, but it seems more common that our clients are interested in that," noticed Tony Lewicki, owner, Turf Tamers Plus, Hinckley, Ohio. He said often, the high-end residential customers he services are "persnickety" about their properties, and more of them are leaning toward the polished look bagging lends. "We see people are requesting it more because we are using equipment that has grass handling systems. We have gained properties because of it."

In some cases, clients will opt to bag highvisibility areas near their front doors or in areas where pets and children play, Lewicki added. "We talk about it up front to see what the customer is looking for," he noted, adding that bagging isolated areas takes more time, and he must figure these charges into their contract.

While contractors generally agree that bagging consumes more time, Billy Gray said he spends an extra 15 minutes on properties when he mulches the grass. Blowing grass chunks and double cutting take more time, figured the owner of The Southern Landscape Group, Pinehurst, N.C.

Gray only leaves clippings on zoysiagrass properties, and he uses a reel mower on this fine-fescue turf and applies plant growth regulators so it doesn't crop up too quickly and cause clipping clumps.

"It's strange - you

can definitely see the

difference. Generally,

the lawns that we leave

the clippings on

look healthier."

- Lance Schelhammer

Otherwise, the Bermudagrass turf in his area is commonly speckled with pine needles, which don't mulch well, Gray said. "We have a lot of pine trees in the area and every week pine straw falls, so we don't have a lawn that doesn't have this mixed in it as well." he illustrated. "We bag the clippings for the cleanliness of the yard and it saves time because we don't have to blow the yard after we mow."

(continued on page 74)

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(continued from page 72)

Gray takes clippings to a landfill since the site his company rents for its facilities doesn't allow room for a composting area. The landfill then converts the green waste to mulch.

And as for Gray's customers, they don't express a preference toward collecting or leaving clippings as long as they see topnotch results. "It is a professional, quality look if it is bagged and kept clean," he said.

TIME IS MONEY. In an industry that sells time, a seemingly trivial debate over clippings isn't small potatoes. Equipment and labor figure into the equation as well, and contractors with efficient maintenance departments understand the importance of tweaking their mower fleet and man-hours to meet their clipping preference.

"This is a time-based industry, and we need to make [the process] as quick as possible," Schelhammer stressed.

And contractors need to figure pricing structures for their mowing services that compensate them for time allotted to clippings, whether it's double cutting them so they can be left on the turf or bagging them so they can be disposed in a landfill.

Minkler marks his bagging process down to the minute. "I don't do it for free," he quipped. "You figure at least two minutes per bag, time-wise, and a bag costs 80 cents. I figure \$1 a minute and \$3 per bag. I do an estimate and then add in my mowing and my monthly fee."

Just as Minkler refined his cost structure to cover extra time, Lewicki designed his equipment fleet to manage his combination bagging jobs. "One has a grass handling system and we use that as the bagging machine," he explained. "When there are certain areas the owner wants grass collected, the crew hits it with a machine that can bag."

Pelletier stopped purchasing mowers with grass handling systems and opted for zero-turn models since he leaves clippings. He looks for deep decks so clippings don't

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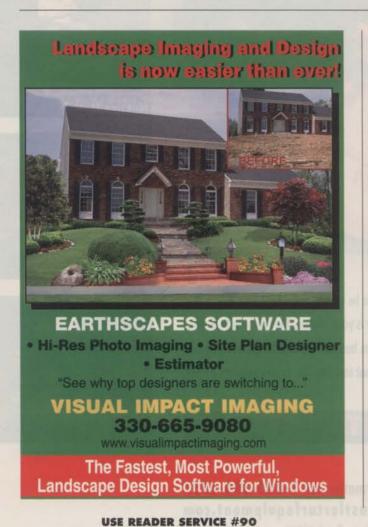
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get caught underneath the mower. "We have 6-inch decks or more on our mowers," Pelletier said. "If you have a bigger area above the blade, it will handle more grass before it plugs.

"We also find that side discharge mowers do a better job for us with clippings, because with mulching models you have to mow slower," Pelletier added.

Similar to the clippings issue itself, equipment and pricing systems can create a divide – but Pelletier identified one neutral party. "The turf doesn't care," he said simply.

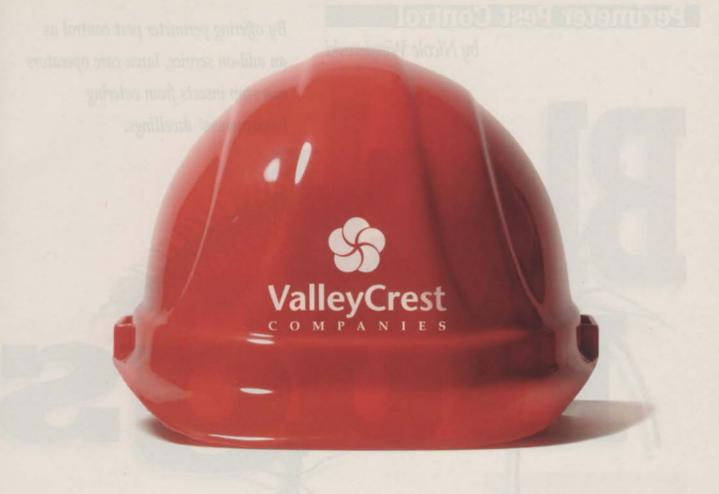
The author is Managing Editor – Special Projects for Lawn & Landscape magazine and can be reached at khampshire@lawnandlandscape.com.





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Perimeter Pest Control

by Nicole Wisniewski

By offering perimeter pest control as an add-on service, lawn care operators can stop insects from entering homeowners' dwellings.

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They've got legs and they know how to use them.

Household pests, like eight-legged spiders, six-legged ants and cockroaches, 350-legged centipedes, and 750-legged millipedes, creep and crawl in damp bathrooms and food-filled kitchens causing even the bravest of souls to shiver and shriek.

Yes, sometimes pests, uncomfortable with their outside holes and haunts, look for nice, cozy indoor places to reside and what better choice for comfortable living quarters than moving in with their human neighbors. "We provide all the amenities," agreed Judy Loven, state director, United States Department of Agriculture's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, West Lafayette, Ind. "These include food, water, shelter, warmth, nesting materials and protection."

Lawn care operators (LCOs)
can stop insects from wriggling
and writhing their way into their
clients' homes and commercial
buildings by offering perimeter pest

control services to build an outdoor barrier against bugs and boost profitability.

ADD-ON ADVANTAGES.

Since interior pest problems typically stem from exterior spaces, residential clients who want to prevent the creepy-crawlies should welcome a complete perimeter home inspection and treatment in addition to their lawn care services. "Ninety percent of pest infestations originate from the outside," confirmed Bobby Jenkins, president, ABC Pest & Lawn Services, Austin, Texas, who typically does a combination

perimeter/structural pest control service, but will do a perimeter-only treatment because of its highly effective nature. "And since customers are used to lawn care technicians doing

to lawn care technicians doing work outside of the house, it's an easy add-on for them."

(continued on page 78)

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Perimeter Pest Control

(continued from page 76)

The profitability factor also makes this service a sensible addition. Some LCOs who perform perimeter pest control said the material expense is 8 to 10 percent of the revenue generated, Jenkins said. Jackie Hague, program coordinator, Lawn Classics, Findlay, Ohio, estimated the cost of perimeter pest control material costs at only 3 to 5 percent of the total application expense. However you look at the numbers, this service clearly offers the profit potential LCOs seek in new services.

And, for clients, perimeter pest control is a way to help keep insects out of their homes without having to apply pesticides (continued on page 80)

hen pricing perimeter pest control services, lawn care operators (LCOs) either charge a basic fee per application for all the homes they treat or they base their pricing structure on the home's linear footage and specific pest problems. Either way, "it should be done so that you account for how you pay labor, how much chemical you use. specific pest problems and the size of the home so a fair profit is made and employees are compensated competitively, pointed out Greg Clendenin, president, Middleton Pest Control, Orlando, Fla.

Companies that charge one set fee per treatment for every home they serve feel this method brings simplicity to the process. "We find that the footprint of the homes can vary so much that structured pricing makes our service affordable to all of our customers," said Paul Wagner, president, Masters Green, Walled Lake, Mich.

Don Wendt, president, Countryside Lawn, Wichita, Kan., has a similar approach, charging his clients \$40 per treatment six times a year.

Other LCOs feel they have to account for the differences between home size and specific insect problems when pricing perimeter pest control. Lawn Classics charges \$35 per application three times a year, equaling \$105, said Jackie Hague, the Findlay, Ohio-based company's program coordinator. "But if the property is more than 200 linear feet, we add 25 cents for every additional linear foot," she said.

Bobby Jenkins, president, ABC Pest & Lawn Services, Austin, Texas, also prefers this method. "If you are more accurate on your costs, then you can give clients a more accurate pricing structure and then the higher the probability you will make a profit," he said. "A simple way to do it is to base it on the linear footage of the structure. Also consider that the older the house, the more cracks and openings exist for pests to crawl in. A lot depends on the amount of foliage around the house too - more dense foliage means a higher likelihood of pest problems.

'Prepare an estimate after a thorough inspection," Jenkins continued. "That way, you make a good presentation to the homeowner and show them that you know the circumstances of their specific situation. It certainly will increase your close rate if it looks like you've done your homework." - Nicole Wisniewski

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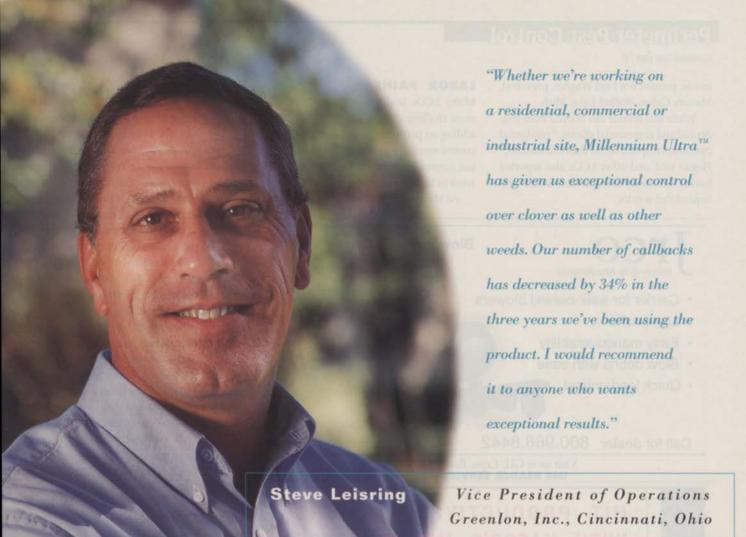
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Perimeter Pest Control

(continued from page 78)

inside, pointed out Paul Wagner, president, Masters Green, Walled Lake, Mich.

While this service can interest both residential and commercial clients, "residential customers respond better than commercial," Hague said, and other LCOs also reported having a majority of residential clients who request this service.

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LABOR PAINS.

Many LCOs said the most challenging part of adding on perimeter pest

control services was figuring out whether to use current lawn care technicians to do the work or to create separate, dedicated crews.

At Masters Green, the tree care division

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takes care of perimeter pest treatments because its employ-

ees are already trained to apply target applications, Wagner said. Similarly, Lawn Classics uses a crew that performs miscellaneous work to do the job.

And most other LCOs find that having a separate crew vs. a lawn care crew perform perimeter pest control is the best way to go. ABC Pest & Lawn started using current crews to do the work initially but Jenkins said "we failed miserably at that. We thought that it made sense at first because you have the economies of sale with one man, one trip. But they are different services and if you use a crew that specializes in one thing to do another, then that job doesn't get the attention to detail it deserves. For instance, the pesticide technicians would do a great service on the pesticide front but they would not be proactive in looking for turf problems."

As a result, the company uses specialized lawn care and pesticide crews today.

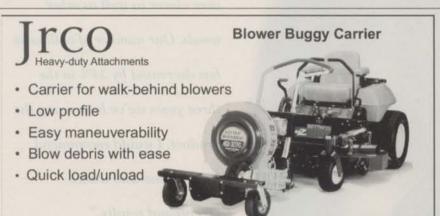
Don Wendt, president, Countryside Lawn, Wichita, Kan., added perimeter pest control to his service mix two years ago and has a dedicated crew do the work. He employs one manager and one LCO who perform this service for the 25 percent of his customers who request it.

In addition to using a dedicated crew, Wendt made sure these two employees also received an additional license in category seven – structural pest control. "Perimeter pest control fringes on other areas since you're spraying the outside of a structure, so we got this license in addition to our turf and ornamental license," he said. "This way we make sure we're covered."

Jenkins agreed that this is a smart move for LCOs who want to add this service. "To be experts in the service, you need to have experts doing the job, so I highly recommend you get an additional license," he said. "Essentially, you're trying to protect the structure from pests, and if that's the goal, you should have the proper licensing that goes with that."

TREATMENT TIPS. When it comes to actually performing the service, LCOs have various means for battling bugs.

Countryside Lawn's technicians use a liq-(continued on page 82)



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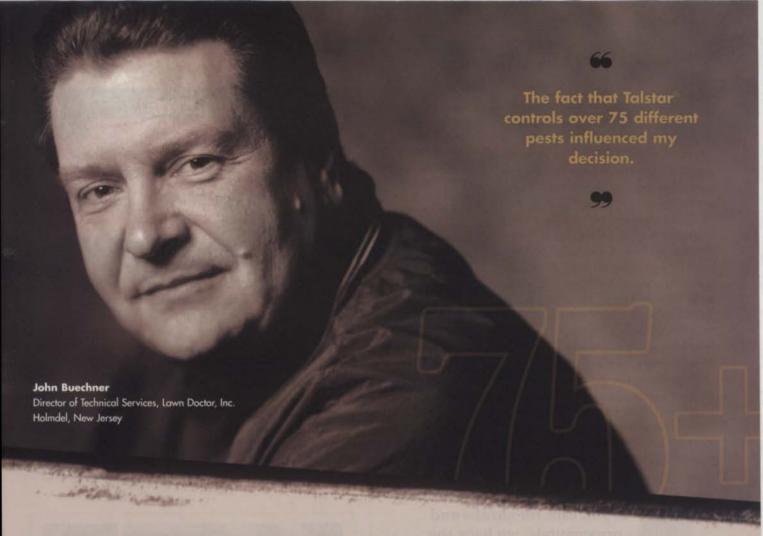
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Perimeter Pest Control

(continued from page 80)

uid product to spray 5 feet out around the home and 2 feet up around the foundation, in addition to spraying around window wells and doors, as well as wasp nests above the perimeter if a problem is sited. "We use a tank with a hand-held gun so we can get more volume and cover more area," Wendt said.

The company offers this service six times a year, starting in February/March to treat wasps, ants, silver fish and spiders, and then again in April/May to take care of ticks, fleas and earwigs. In June/July, yellow jackets and fleas become a problem and then in August and September, the company treats for mud dobbers and, finally, in October/November, the spray prevents the dreaded brown recluse spiders and crickets.

But perimeter pest control is a year-round service in Kansas, where many wood-shingle roofs attract silver fish, which then attract that insect's predator – spiders. Kansas' relatively high humidity also attracts various types of insects, Wendt explained.

Masters Green provides clients with an insect shield around their homes, preventing such insects as ants, earwigs, deer ticks, roaches and spiders from entering, Photo: Masters Green



Climate, environment and pest pressure also make Florida residents year-round potential perimeter pest control clients, said Greg Clendenin, president and chief executive officer, Middleton Pest Control, Orlando, Fla. In regions like this, LCOs need to sweep eaves and other spaces where spiders have built webs, treat under eaves, at the base of homes and near debris or tall weeds around homes, as well as make sure trees and shrubs do not touch the home or

structure because this can cause possible interior pest problems, Clendenin said.

While the service requires many little steps, the main key to effective treatment is ensuring that the spray band around the home is thorough and without any gaps, said Wagner, whose service consists of treatments in spring, summer and fall, since Michigan winters keep bugs at bay part of the year. "We make sure to properly treat under decks

(continued on page 84)





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Perimeter Pest Control

(continued from page 82)

as well as any "bug doorways," such as vents, caulk cracks and garage doors," he pointed out. "If properly done, service calls are rare."

The only time the service is threatened is with heavy rains or when long periods of intense sunlight weaken product effectiveness, so LCOs should plan to avoid making applications when rain looms. And to handle sunlight issues, LCOs shouldn't confine themselves to just one application technique, Jenkins said. "Use a lot of tools," he commented, pointing out that liquid treatments alone

don't always do the trick. "Dusts are very effective. Power dusters can get material into places that are protected from weather. Baits are also very good tools to use outside of the house. Copper steel wool is a great tool to have – we put boric acid into the weep holes of house and use the copper steel wool to stuff it into the weep holes to ensure the

And, according to Jenkins, a home's perimeter is more than just the space surrounding it. Perimeter treatments also should include storage sheds, garages, woodpiles, ivy beds and tree areas because they are technically part of the home's entire outside environment.

product stays put and to block insects' pas-

sage into the home."

The author is Managing Editor of Lawn & Landscape magazine and can be reached at nwisniewski@lawnandlandscape.com.

Quick P

CLIENT CONSIDERATIONS: Before performing perimeter pest control treatments, lawn care operators (LCOs) should provide clients with some tips to enhance their service experience, according to Don Wendt, president, Countryside Lawn, Wighita, Kan. These include:

- Close all windows so that products don't get halde the home.
- Use indoor bug bombs or life a pest control operator to treat indoor spaces right before or after perimeter treatment to ensure elimination of bugs that may have already made their way indoors and to prolong effects of the perimeter service.
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Irrigation Training

by Kristen Hampshire

Bolstering crews with irrigation basics pays dividends for companies willing to invest in training.

Hit the books before next year's irrigation contracts are signed and sealed. Contractors who fine-tune training techniques build solid crews that perform at a peak – and ultimately deliver profitable, quality work.

"First, sending employees to training is one of the best morale boosters a boss can do for the company," identified Tim Wilson, education director, the Irrigation Association, Falls Church, Va. "You are sending a direct message that the employee is important to you and they are worth an investment of time, money and resources. You can't buy that kind of morale.

"Then, that employee is able to go out and do jobs correctly, so there are less warranty and repair problems and the jobs go in quicker with less supervision," he added. "All the way around, it's a good deal."

GROUP WORK. If maintenance crews confuse an irrigation controller for a security system or couldn't find a spray head if they tripped over one, it's time to do your homework and bring irrigation know-how to the field. Even employees not dedicated to the irrigation division should understand the basics, noted Dave Scattergood, landscape manager, Signature Landscapes, Redmond, Wash.

"You can't afford to only have one person who knows what they are doing if you are going to expand because that person won't be able to drive around enough to catch every single problem," Scattergood pointed out. Signature Landscapes employs one irrigation technician who takes care of complicated issues and installations, but his crews aren't tripping over nozzles and fiddling cluelessly with controllers. He makes sure the maintenance and landscape crew members understand how to set and reset irrigation clocks and identify leaks and broken valves. They might not have the skills to carry out the solution, but they can identify the problem, which saves time for the irrigation technician.

"You don't want to hire five irrigation technicians – they are expensive and need to be kept busy all the time," Scattergood explained. "The regular crews are already on site, so there are not extra pay or transportation costs."

Besides, when maintenance crews spend time on their assigned properties each week, the clients expect them to diagnose and repair on any landscape problems. "We need [crews] to do a preliminary evaluation of any problems so we can save time for our area (continued on page 88)

Frigation C

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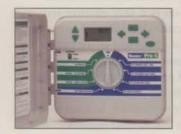
















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<u> Irrigation Training</u>

(continued from page 86)

managers," Scattergood pointed out.

An over-baked lawn can indicate an irrigation complication, and if crew members know how to adjust clocks to feed the turf, they won't need to "send out the troops" for a basic adjustment. In addition, crews that install new landscapes need to water in plants, and basic irrigation clock knowledge

allows them to increase watering times easily. "We want to adjust the clocks appropriately to factor in that there is a new landscape instead of a 20-year-old one," Scattergood reasoned.

Wilson suggested covering safety topics like using primer and glue properly, operating trenchers and torches, and excavating.

QUESTION...*

1. When is the best time of day to water?

* Find answers to these questions on page 92

Some field fixes to teach employees might include manifolding valves, setting heads, and changing and setting controllers. Fitting pipe and proper wiring and splicing are additional subjects owners might want to review with employees.

Dedicating time both in the field and during regular meetings to cover these irrigation how-tos will keep crews informed on irrigation necessities, Wison said.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS. Hands-on training is a sure-fire, show-and-tell way to communicate irrigation techniques. Employees learn by getting their hands dirty and watching, understanding and learning from mistakes.

"Hands-on is a very effective training method, because a lot of times, showing them things out of a book and giving them a big speech doesn't stay with them as well," Scattergood pointed out. While Scattergood supplements his outdoor education with some indoor explanation, he finds spur-of-the-moment lessons most effective.

"When you are in the field, always take the time to walk over and take a look at something you think the person you are with might not know," Scattergood suggested.

This approach allows technicians to ask questions and even try to fix the problem themselves with supervision. "You can give them an excellent hands-on lesson and it is more personal that way," he added. "You are usually doing it with one person right on the site."

The danger in relying on this technique is time. Wilson noted that many foremen and supervisors aren't proactive with this method because they end up sacrificing productivity in the field.

"We all have good intentions, but in-field training often takes a back seat to production, and the employees in the company suffer because of it," he noted. "The foreman is under a lot of pressure to get the job in and get it in fast."

(continued on page 90)

QUESTION...

2. How many cubic inches are there in a gallon?

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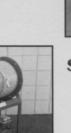
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USE READER SERVICE #43

Irrigation Training

(continued from page 88)

QUESTION...

3. What is the optimum operating pressure for pop-up spray heads?

This attitude might shift if managers budget time and dollars toward education, Wilson suggested. For example, a large company might allocate \$20,000 each year for training. If it applied \$10,000 of this to lost production hours, foremen could take more in-field time-outs to explain concepts. "Take 10 jobs and allow them each to have \$1,000 less profit," he figured. "Spend that 'less profit' on on-the-job training."

IN THE HOUSE. Scott Faye has found a way to bring the advantages of hands-on training into his facility.

The "heart of training" at Treasure Coast Irrigation is the training table – a 20-by-8 foot wall that serves as an equipment learning laboratory for the technicians. "It is the backdrop," Faye described, noting the display features controllers and valves from each manufacturer, and since it is such an eye-catcher, it often serves as a selling tool for clients.

But the key purpose of this prop is to train.

"Everything we do for in-house training revolves around this table," Faye noted. "The manufacturer gives us samples and we mount them on our training wall. They are not only physically mounted to the wall, they are wired in to run 24/7. They are wired into the same manufacturer valves, if they make valves."

This real-life simulation prepares technicians to work with a variety of valves, nozzles and controllers. Paired with regular Mondaymorning meetings that touch on safety, com-

QUESTION...

4. What is the weakest type of connection in an irrigation system?

QUESTION...

5. Where do most freeze breaks occur?

pany policy and customer service, this technical chapter conveniently brings field situations indoors, Faye figured.

"Every week, I try to take a real situation that happened last week – it may be basic or more involved – and share the learning experience the technician had with everyone," Fay explained.

Training table topics are prepared and don't last more than a half-hour each morning. Every day, trainees watch crews prepare and re-stock trucks before heading to a quick session at the table. Faye devised a list of 30 topics for the training manager to cover in order. This "classroom" setting precedes a day in the field with the crews, and each day trainees will ride along with a different group.

This "Training Log," Faye calls it, outlines a format for his foremen to follow in the field and bridges the in-house and on-the-

(continued on page 92)





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<u> Irrigation Training</u>

(continued from page 90)

OUESTION

6. What is the problem if the lateral line leads in a different direction every time repairs are made?

job training technicians must complete. And Faye has found the topic order is key. "There has to be a logical sequence - you can't skip around," he said. "By having a track, we start with heads and nozzles. We work from the head to the source, and it helps a new technician understand what he is working on."

In addition, this training log provides a system of checks and balances for Treasure Coast. Technicians understand the agenda and foremen are held to the curriculum because they must check off that trainees grasp the concepts.

"If the employee just rides with anyone any different day and comes short on some knowledge, and he says, 'No one covered it with me,' then, I can look at the chart and find out," Fave reasoned.

GRAB A PARTNER. Faye's company is different than some. His focus is irrigation, and he shares his expertise with other landscape installation and maintenance firms that want to offer the service.

"There is a common belief among landscape contractors that irrigation is a profit center and they want to add it to what they already do," he observed. "But it becomes like a stepchild."

Since irrigation is an add-on service and not a primary business source for most companies, it becomes an afterthought and the training suffers as well. This snowballs into quality issues-jobs aren't properly installed, warranty issues crop up and customers complain. "It doesn't always get sold at the right price and it can flop along like a raggedy tire on the back of a trailer and it never flourishes," Fave compared.

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His suggestion: Find a partner.

"If all else fails, find a really good irrigation contractor and partner with them," he advised. Or, invest in training. "A company has to have at least one person who understands it."

The author is Managing Editor - Special Projects for Lawn & Landscape magazine and can be reached at khampshire@lawnandlandscape.com.

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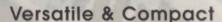
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Residential Design

by Mandy Jenkins

From Washington to New Jersey, designers go the extra mile with these award-winning landscapes.

BACKYARD TRADITION

Every yard has a story, but this residential project has one that goes back more than 30 years. When Charles Bowers, president of Garden Gate Landscaping, Silver Springs, Md., first started in the business in the late 1960s, one of his first landscape jobs was for a family who wanted to replicate a mountain look with a rustic pond and waterfall in their back yard.

Forty years later, the family's daughter, now married in the same neighborhood, wanted the same job from the same man. The problem was her lawn was half the size of her mother's.

Bowers ended up slightly redesigning and "retrofitting" the project to the daughter's lawn size. "I told her it could be done," Bowers said. "It just had to be squeezed in carefully."

First off, Bowers had to work with the existing deck and retaining wall. The deck was cut in size and the wall extended to work in the pond-like swimming pool that was half the size of the original design.

The other elements the client wanted included an outdoor dining patio, many lush plant varieties in the front and back yards and a spa that connected to the pool with a waterfall.

Bowers said the hardscape work was made difficult by limited access to the back yard, but the cooperation of a neighbor allowed a small amount of equipment into the yard. The Garden Gate crews managed with the space they had, installing the hardscapes, lighting and plant material.

Crews encountered a drainage problem, not only from the new pool, but also from a neighboring yard. The pool could not drain onto the plants surrounding it, so a subcontractor had to lead the property's excess water into the street.

As for the plant material, the owner wanted a lush, overgrown and "wild" look for her yard with developed plants filling out the landscape quickly. Although a fairly "typical" palate of plants was installed, Bowers said the number of varieties used was double or triple the amount usually used.

This design won a 2002 Associated Landscape Contractors of America Grand Award for residential design.

WALSH RESIDENCE

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SPRING IN SEATTLE

The clients in this Seattle home wanted a backyard paradise, but they didn't have a great deal of space to work with. "There was only 6 feet between the house and the neighboring wall," stated Hendrikus Schraven, owner, Hendrikus Schraven Landscape, Seattle, Wash.

The clients desired a natural-looking spa with surrounding patios and a breakfast nook outside of their kitchen. In addition to digging a hole to fit the 5-foot-deep spa, fiber optics and water piping were installed under the house, which was difficult to do with only a small excavator.

The spa, made of gunnite, was surrounded by stones and also featured a foot bath. The stone of the spa was worked in with the careful combination of brick and granite used for the remaining patio areas.

The breakfast nook, located just off of the kitchen, had a special feature in a brick water-filled liner along its wall that housed various water plants. Other ornamental additions Schraven added included "indestructible" handmade Vietnamese pots, trellises covered in flowering vines and a custom-made sculpture for the spa area.

One of the most interesting additions to the backyard design, Schraven said, was a 10-foot-tall Fuchsia he found on an earlier job. Schraven also planted a weeping white pine, and an assortment of perennials and flowering vines like passion flower, clematis and wisteria.

This design won two awards from the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals, including the association's Judges' award in 2001.

CHAYES-BORG RESIDENCE

Hendrikus Schraven

Landscape,

Seattle, Wash.





Personalized touches and natural stone elements bring Mother Nature into this small, suburban yard.

Photo: Hendrikus Schraven Landscape

SUBURBAN DREAM

SANTOLIQUIDO

RESIDENCE

Jacobsen Landscape

Design and

Construction,

Midland Park N.J.

A small, sloping back lot left little space for relaxation at this suburban property just outside of New York City. "They were two working parents with two active young boys," explained Glenn Jacobsen, president, Jacobsen Landscape Design and Construction, Midland Park, N.J. "They needed an aesthetically pleasing back yard that was suitable for recreation and entertainment."

That meant more than simply installing a patio in the ½-acre lot. It took six months, more than 30 employees and an estimated 2,000 man-hours to transform the back yard.

The clients' needs and wants were numerous and a challenging 15-foot grade change required extensive sitework to create a functional property. The partially shaded back yard was landscaped with plant material that provides year-round interest.

"We have four seasons, so we install plants that flower in the spring and summer, have attractive color displays in the fall and interesting branches and bark patterns for the winter," Jacobsen explained. "With the partial shade, we had to mix the plant selections with holly, evergreens, flowering trees and ornamental grasses."

Jacobsen crews installed the hardscaping, plant material, irrigation and lighting and oversaw the recreational features installations – a swimming pool, multi-purpose sports court and play area.

Jacobsen said the most challenging project feature was merely fitting everything the clients wanted into a small and sloped backyard. "Now they have a back yard that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing that they can use year round," he said.

This design won a 2002 first place residential design/build award from the New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association.



This design used terracing to make a sloping backyard into a spacious family playground. Photo: lacobsen Landscape.

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SIMPLE ELEGANCE

Many of the people moving into Florida are transplants from the North. This particular client was building a home in Vero Beach with a landscape design coming straight from New York. The designer hired Rood Landscape Co., Jupiter, Fla., to install the project.

The home had a back yard containing an inner courtyard. The clients wanted this space to have a calming, tranquil feel, which was accomplished using developed plant material and a spacious design around a pre-installed pool.

Before any planting could be done, the contractors replaced the soil in the courtyard. Then, Project Coordinator Richard Rutledge said, came the hard part. Full-grown live oaks and sable



Tall, curved palms and potted plants create a spacious, peaceful setting in this Florida courtyard. Photo

palms were brought in, but since the courtyard was almost completely enclosed, the trees, measuring 20 to 25 feet in height, had to be installed with a crane to get past the courtyard walls.

After getting the trees in place, the lawn was leveled and the smaller plant material was put in. Flowering vines and a variety of ornamental shrubs were planted, followed by the turf itself, which Rutledge described as a "temperamental turf with a putting green-like surface." Potted plants were also installed for accent color.

This project won a 1998 Associated Landscape Contractors of America Grand Award and a Florida Nurserymen & Growers Association award for residential installation.

A SEPARATE PEACE

MARTIN RESIDENCE

Connelly Gardens, Rocky River, Ohio.

A number of full vines and cedar privacy panels bring a private, indoor mood to this Ohio backyard. Photo Connelly Gardens

The owner of this Northeastern Ohio property wanted a little bit of life and a lot of privacy added to his back yard. An existing back deck faced the cars in the driveway, which made for an undesired view for entertaining. "He really wanted privacy and warmth in his back yard, like a room within a room," explained Dan Connelly, owner, Connelly Gardens, Rocky River, Ohio.

After clearing the backyard area, Connelly went to work on the structural elements of the new backyard plan, which included a stone walk and patio area, in addition to the existing deck.

For screening and additional privacy, Connelly built and installed clear cedar arbors and

privacy panels around the new patio area and in front of the driveway. An assortment of trees, flowering vines and ericaceous and enkianthus shrubs added life to these wooden structures.

To highlight the various areas of sun and shade, Connelly used a mix of plants including dogwood trees, azaleas, rhododendron, ferns, mosses and assorted fruit trees. He also incorporated the client's existing perennials.

After all of the plant material was installed, the only thing left to complete this outdoor room was a little night lighting. Connelly used an assortment of down lights, up lights and widely-spaced path lighting to create a "full-moon-like" effect on the backyard area. Tiny lights with bluebell fixtures were a real hit with the client, but they also proved to be effective in creating the natural look desired for the property.

Despite doing all of the work through his company, including repositioning and repairing an existing irrigation system, Connelly said the project lasted only about a month.

This project won three awards from the Ohio Landscapers Association and two awards from the Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association in 2001.

PROJECT

Landscape,

Jupiter, Fla.

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- 5 awards in the Ohio Excellence in Journalism Awards

Three of these awards were awarded to LawnandLandscape.com, the industry's most dynamic Web site with more than 40,000 user sessions and nearly 500,000 page views per month.

Conversation

by Bob West

CONVERSATION Landon

One of the industry's most respected professionals talks about how the industry has grown and what it must do to move forward.

People love to criticize their competitors, but rarely will you hear someone criticize Chapel Valley Landscape Co., Woodbine, Md., or its leader, Landon Reeve. A 35-year industry veteran, Reeve is respected across the country and has been honored numerous times for his company's work as well as his own contributions to the industry.

Chapel Valley wasn't always viewed as one of the industry's most professional firms, however. Reeve started the business in 1968 with two employees, and he admitted to falling victim to many of the same mistakes that plague so many other contractors just getting started. But a commitment to performing quality work, an intense competitive drive and a humility that kept him always striving to learn served as drivers that pushed the business beyond \$26 million in revenue and to the No. 25 spot on the Lawn & Landscape Top 100 list (October 2002).

In January 2003, he'll turn over the reins for Chapel Valley to his son, James, and transition into the role of full-time chairman, a change he views as a new opportunity. He promises to remain active in the business as well as the industry, and that's a good thing for both. Here, he shares some of his thoughts built up over the last few decades.

LAWN & LANDSCAPE (L&L): How did you get started and what drew you to this industry?

LANDON REEVE (LR): I started Chapel Valley right out of our home in 1968. I started out the classic way of doing

(continued on page 102)

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Conversation

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estimates and meeting with people in evenings and running crews during the day. We had three people the first year. Gradually, we got to the point where I could devote more time to selling and organizing. I did everything for numerous years—probably middle 1970s when I could hire someone to start managing. There are plateaus in business, and \$1 million is where it hit me hard that I had to start training, managing, getting help and running this like it's an organization.

One advantage I had was not growing up in the business so I didn't have those

barriers around me. People told me the only way I could make money in this business was to cheat someone. I may have been idealistic, but I thought I could do a quality job and make a profit. I still believe it, but that was the mentality of the 1960s. It was harder than I thought, but still possible. I just did what I believed in because I didn't know better.

The business kept growing because we did a good job. I always wanted to hire better people than myself, especially in areas I didn't want to do or areas I didn't do well. I think that's a problem people get

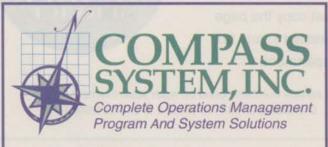
into – wanting to be a super guy who knows and does everything, but that wasn't important to me. I wanted to be part of the process and doing what I thought was right. I thought that if you were honest, treated people right and did a good job then they would want you to come back and do more. That's how we grew – more people wanted us to do more business, and that philosophy has served us well.

L&L: What do you see as the biggest changes in the industry since then?

LR: There are a lot of changes. We are now a professional industry that is more professional than 40 years ago, no question about it. People are better educated coming into the business. It's a bigger business. The whole industry is a big business now where it was mom-and-pop with three and four generations when I started. One or two trucks was a big business then. We have associations now that we didn't have then. There weren't any landscape associations back then - the starting of ALCA in 1963 is something special. I was able to play a part in that, and I appreciate being able to be part of the industry's evolution. (continued on page 106)

on BUSINESS

"We don't know what we don't know, and that's a blessing and a curse in some ways because if you make bad mistakes, you're done." – Landon Reeve



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Conversation

(continued from page 102)

Having business knowledge is so much more critical now. The educational level has to be much broader, so the pay is better. No more \$1 an hour and moving up to \$1.25 in five years. The opportunities are unlimited now. We were one of the first companies around here to get uniforms, and now everyone has them. We were also one of the first to regularly clean the trucks so they didn't rust to death – all of that has changed for the better.

We have to constantly improve. We have strong competition, and that keeps us sharp and working everyday. That keeps us trying to think of different ways to improve. I have a philosophy of continually learning and constantly improving. Good competition is wonderful. We want to beat them everyday, but they're still good to have. Business is harder today and it's harder to sustain. That's not just this industry, but it's the overall economy. You have to have staying power, knowledge and be comfortable

On.LEADERSHIP

"I tell our people all the time it's up to us – it's not the market, the competitors. We need to be in a position to make money all of the time." – Landon Reeve

with change because the pace of change is so much faster than it was. Our first four or five years, we didn't go out on jobs in the summer. We did all of our work in the spring and fall and just got along in the summer while laying everyone off in the winter. Now, we have to work everyday.

The thought of starting today is scary. To start a business today, there's lot of opportunities, but the people starting businesses, for the most part, are better planned, better educated and they probably worked somewhere else and got some good knowledge. They probably all have some source of money, and they know that. I didn't have any of that. I just blindly went down the path to start a business.

Students and people in the industry have so much knowledge today because no one would talk to each other back then – everyone had secrets. You just didn't go visit other contractors. So, to start this business today would be quite a challenge but I would be better prepared. It's all relative. We don't know what we don't know, and that's a blessing and a curse in some ways because if you make bad mistakes you're done.

I'm not surprised by the industry's growth. We used to grow perennials and sell them for the 30 cents, and I would think about how many we had to sell to make a buck. But people were becoming more interested in their gardens, and I saw a huge

(continued on page 108)



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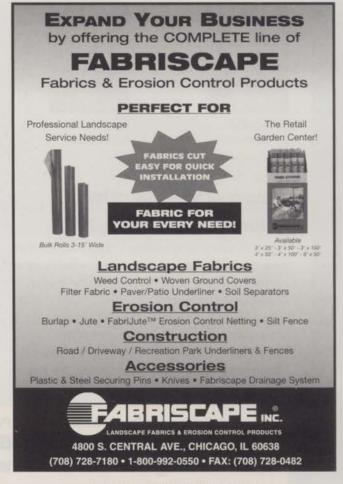
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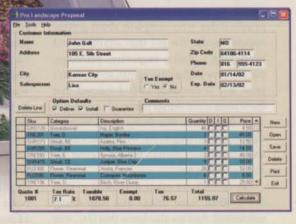
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Conversation

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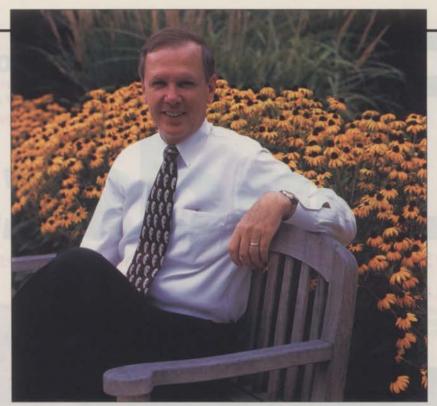
possibility that this would grow into a business. But I never envisioned this company being this size. Whatever it grew to was OK. I'm not driven by size or just to grow. In fact, that growth kills more companies than it helps. I just believe the world is a golden opportunity that is unlimited, and I tell our interns that today. They don't understand the opportunity they have and the education they're getting – the world is there to be picked. I'm an optimist, and I believe the opportunities are there.

L&L: What have been some of the key lessons that you've learned about creating a landscape business?

LR: When I started out, no one knew me and I didn't know them. I would ride around looking for jobs that needed landscaping and I would pound on the door, go in and see if they needed any landscaping. I didn't have anything to sell other than the fact that I was there - no reputation, no name, no jobs. I was desperate. I wasn't a real aggressive guy and I didn't want to even call people on the phone, but I didn't have any choice. Finally, some folks gave me a chance. I can't even have a conversation with these salespeople today who complain about getting appointments. We got into anything and everything - decks, carpentry, plantings, etc. My love is planting plants, so we didn't mow any lawns until 1980. I learned that there were some things that made sense and some that didn't, like doing decks because they took us so long to do. We couldn't make any money even though we did a great job and had some fun.

So, in 1975, we made a decision to stop doing all of these things and stop doing residential. And we also knew that D.C. was about to have all of these corporate head-quarters move into town, so we wanted to get one of those jobs. We started talking to people and we had been doing commercial work. We were being a disservice to residential because we weren't focusing on it, so we cancelled all of our residential contracts and just went after commercial in the middle of the recession.

After getting embarrassed by companies who we referred for maintenance work, we took two years to learn how to do it right because that's the only way I'll do something. We learned pretty quickly. Some of these things are common sense, so



A self-described optimist, Landon Reeve believes the landscape industry offers endless opportunities to contractors starting businesses today. Photo: Erik Kvalsvik

we've done maintenance every sense. It's not magic.

We weren't diversified enough in the early 1980s, and living and dying with the commercial market can be gruesome. So we made sure we had a real focus so maintenance people just do maintenance, commercial just do commercial and so forth. If you want jobs done right, you have to have focus. That's their No. 1 job. You want them to become champions in what they do. You can't have everyone doing everything. We basically have a bunch of small companies under a larger umbrella, that way they're small enough to deal with the client without being too big. We have branches with 12 to 14 people and a full support system so they can do \$3 million in work. A lot of decisions came from trial and error. Keep in mind, I didn't know anything - just kept bumping into things that worked.

L&L: What do think are some of the biggest obstacles young contractors have to overcome?

LR: They have to believe they can do it. I tell our people all the time it's up to us – it's not the market or the competitors. In every market, there are people making money and losing money all the time. It's up to us. We need to be in a position to make money all the time. It's just more difficult in tough times. But they have to believe and have a

plan that this can be done – the horizon or vision has to be there. Then you have to have the people there with you to grow it. Obviously, the market has to be receptive, and good and bad markets can both be not receptive. You need to be in a good market – look around you and see how many successful landscape companies are there. If you don't see any, that's a clue.

Then you have to have strategies and values that propel your business. They're like individuals – each with his or her own philosophy, and that comes from owners and key people. The people become believers and champions of those philosophies. If the philosophy is you're going to grow, everyone has to believe that. You can't have half the people thinking growth is bad. That's what happens and why good people leave companies because they're not on the same page, and we've had that happen ourselves.

If you can't paint the picture, you've got a huge problem. I tell people to describe to me the company in three or five years – once you see the picture, it's easier to do.

L&L: The Baltimore/Washington, D.C., market is incredibly competitive. How has Chapel Valley thrived in this area?

LR: You have to understand your market. You have to be able to develop a business

(continued on page 112)

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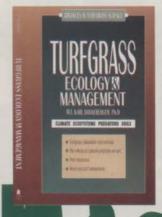
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Conversation

(continued from page 108)

that can survive in a market. You have to differentiate yourself. You have to figure out where the opportunities are and work on them and not just do everything everyone else does, and you have to be able to offer solid value to clients. That means perceived value from the clients – reliability, dependability, consistency, quality, doing what you say, doing it right the first time, being accountable, which means doing what the client tells you they want done. Know your competition. We're in a market with a lot of competition and some of the largest companies in the country. They keep us really sharp, and I think we keep them sharp.

We have to constantly work on how we differentiate ourselves and building better relationships and selling a better value. You have those discussions job by job. We're constantly looking for niche markets that we can roll into major services, but you also can't be all things to all people. So you want to differentiate within those parameters – know what won't work for you. Know your strengths and weaknesses, use them to your benefit, just like in life. It's a competitive world, and I'm a competitor – I love to win and I work hard at that. The competition is part of our life.

L&L: How has being in this market helped Chapel Valley?

LR: It makes you a better business. We have competitors that have basically copied us over the years. That's nice, but it means we have to be better. We have pressure to be better everyday, and that's a good thing. Dominant companies have a different set of issues to deal with. You have to be problem solving everyday and build the relationships so clients won't go elsewhere. Small companies don't have the resources, time or knowledge necessary to do this. I believe we fail when we don't take advantage of the opportunities we have and really max them out. That's why it's so tough to start out and grow in this market.

Getting cheap work is easy, but getting it at a price where you can sustain yourself isn't so easy. We have companies that are pretty tight, and we have to compete with them. We can beat them in a lot of ways, and price isn't one of the best ways. We can outperform them or out service them. We like to win jobs when we're second or third on price.

on COMPETITION

"We have strong competition, and that keeps us sharp. Good competition is wonderful. We want to beat them every day, which is why they are good to have." – Landon Reeve

L&L: You talked earlier about expanding your service offerings. Does a company need to be full service to succeed?

LR: You don't need to be full-service. Some of our competitors are very focused. This gives us an advantage but also gives us a disadvantage. You have to be good at all of them and be able to coordinate them so it's seamless to the client. If all I did was maintenance, that would be easy, so to speak. But this differentiates us to some clients.

We look at a client as being a client for life, whereas in the commercial maintenance business there isn't much loyalty – they're a client until the next bid comes out. We look for long-term relationships. We do some commercial bid work, but not too much of it. We want to do the install, maintenance, lighting and then the follow up with add-on services. Property managers need mow, blow and go and for you to stay within the budget. We could do that, but we'd like to get a little more money out of it.

I've said this whole maintenance business is going to become very tough. It's getting tougher and tougher. It used to be a good business.

L&L: What do you think will be the keys to creating a successful landscape firm in the future?

LR: Really paying attention to the basics of running a good business. Opportunities are unbelievable. Diversification opportunities are there with holiday lighting and water features. The opportunities are there – the basics are going to still be core to successful companies, and that's making sure you have the customer in mind.

There are three main company goals that should happen if we're going to succeed:

- Our customers have to be taken care of properly and be satisfied.
- We have to have employees who are growing and challenged.
 - · We have to make a profit.

We have to do that all at once. We can't focus on making a profit by laying off people or cutting our services. You can't do that. You have to balance the three-legged stoolpull one out and you'll fall down. That balance is the key. Balance that and have good goals and philosophies, then the future is unlimited. You can be as good as you want to be – goes back to your own dream.

It's just like playing baseball or football—work on throwing and catching. Successful companies get in trouble when they stop doing what made them successful. You can't get too involved with how successful you are. It's happened to us — we're making money, things are good, and then you become your own worst enemy. That's my biggest fear. When things are going really well, then I'm looking around behind me.

When I started out, I thought I could grow a business and then kick back and just let it roll. Today, I'm working harder than ever, everyday, everyday, everyday, and we have to get sharper everyday. When it gets good is when it gets tough because that's when people stop doing the right things because a lot of them are tough and no fundealing with people problems, vendors, etc. Suddenly, customers and people leave.

L&L: What are your expectations for the landscape market in 2003?

LR: We see continued growth and increasing profits. I can't speak for all markets, but we see this as positive. There are certainly a lot of issues out there that could impact us. The war and terrorist situations. We could have some major issues that we can't control. But I think being an optimistic guy, that's always been on the horizon. There's always something that will throw a curve at you. But people in this country pull together and make this work. How this effects our industry will depend on how good you are as a company to adjust to those changes. The problem for us is to be able to make it happen. If we want more business, we need to build relationships and figure out how to get more business. We control that no one else does.

The author is Editor/Publisher of Lawn & Landscape magazine and can be reached at bwest@lawnandlandscape.com.

Products

LESCO Combination Spreader

• Combines accuracy of a drop spreader with the efficiency of a rotary unit

80poundcapacity,
injectionmolded



broadcast hopper

- 24-inch injection-molded drop spreader diffuser assembly
- Independent calibration and on/off assemblies
- · Stainless steel frame and hardware
- · Enclosed 5:1 gear assembly
- Applies granular fertilizer, control products, grass seed, ice melt products and more

Circle 200 on reader service form

Caterpillar 303CR Mini-Hyrdraulic Excavator

- A zero-tail-swing model allows operators work in tight spaces
- With 25.6 hp, the unit features a triple pump hydraulic system for maximum digging power



- Ground speed of nearly 3 mph for job-tojob travel
- Operating weight of 7,500 pounds
- 12-inch-wide tracks minimize impact on tree roots, lawns, driveways, etc.
- Can climb 25-degree inclines
- Has a maximum digging depth of nearly 11 feet

Circle 201 on reader service form

Canplas Surface Drainage Line

 Constructed of injection-molded thermoplastics

- Line consists of six drainage product categories: round catch basins and grates; square catch basins and grates; channel drains; valve boxes; backwater valves and sewer fittings
- Grates are used with 3-, 4- and 6-inch corrugated pipe, sewer and drain pipe, and sewer and drain fittings
- Wide range of colors and load ratings offered for both the grates and covers

Circle 203 on reader service form



You can now request product information online and receive a response immediately! Just visit www.lawnandlandscape.com and click on the "free product information" logo on the front page. There, you can submit your product information requests directly to manufacturers. Or, simply circle the numbers on page 101 of this month's issue and fax the form to 210/001-0504.

Hunter Industries Wireless Rain Sensor

- Can be installed on a residential or commercial site without running electrical lines to the controller
- Can be mounted anywhere on a site where rainfall is unobstructed
- The sensor's transmitter has a range of 300 feet
- Sensor is compatible with all standard 24-volt controllers
- · Receiver has a built-in bypass switch
- Easy installation typically takes less than 15 minutes
- Quick response functions turns off the irrigation system as soon as rain starts
- Rain-Clik can be added to an existing system without trenching and wire runs
 Circle 204 on reader service form

PBI/Gordon SpeedZone Herbicide

- Now registered for use in the state of California
- Herbicide contains the active ingredient carfentrazone-ethyl combined with phenoxies and dicamba
- Broad-spectrum weed
 control via systemic and contact activity
- Visual control results seen within 24 hours
- Strong cool-weather performance works in early spring and late fall
- · Applications can be made as high as 90 degrees F
- · Product is rain fast in three hours

Circle 202 on reader service form

Products

Alitec Skid-Steer Attachments

- · Power augers available in eight models
- 11/2-inch pivot pins are plated to resist rust
- Available in sizes ranging from a 6-inch diameter to 36-inch diameter
- Stump grinders offer a 20-inch cutting depth, wide cutting head and quick-attach bracket
- · Fit most skid-steers with standard auxiliary hydraulic

flows of 15 gallons per minute

- The tillers fit a variety of applications and come in 52-, 73- and 84-inch widths
- Attachments available through all Woods dealers

Circle 205 on reader service form



Komatsu Excavator

- The PC138USLC-2 near-zero-tail-swing excavator is designed to operate in confined areas
- The 86-hp, 30,865-pound machine offers



power comparable to its standard-sized counterparts

- The excavator features Komatsu's
 HydrauMind hydraulic control system
- Operators can choose among three different working modes
- Nearly 21,000 pounds of digging force Circle 206 on reader service form

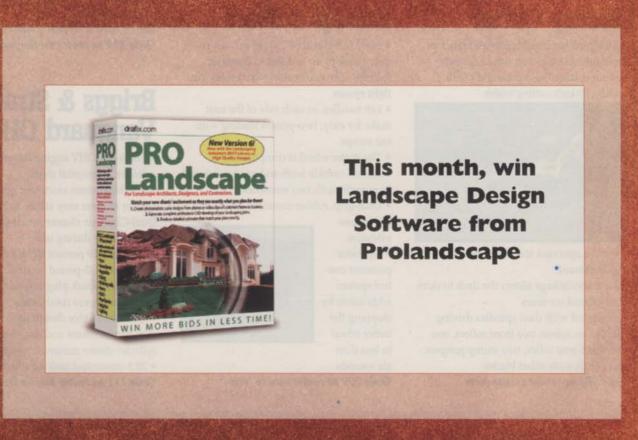




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Products

Honda Hand-Held Power Equipment

- Four-stroke string trimmers and stick edgers
- Hand-held trimmers feature semi-matic feed, nylon cutting heads
- All units powered by Honda engines that meet all EPA and CARB emission requirements
- Units weigh between 13.9 pounds and 16.8 pounds and are available with loop- or bike-type handles

Circle 207 on reader service form



Bobcat Brushcat Rotary Cutter

- Designed for mulching small branches and saplings up to 3 inches in diameter and for cutting thick grass and brush
- Offer 90-inch cutting width



- Can be operated traveling both forward and backward
- Flotation linkage allows the deck to skim over ground contours
- Equipped with dual spindles driving two blades apiece, two front rollers, one full-width rear roller, two stump jumpers and 3-inch-wide offset blades

Circle 208 on reader service form

Vermeer Stump Cutters

- SC90 (9 hp) and SC130 (13 hp) can remove stumps up to 3 feet in diameter
- Units' slim width allows for access into tight spaces
- Lift handles on each side of the unit make for easy, two-person loading without ramps
- The cutter wheel is composed of 12 tungsten-carbide teeth and can be changed in minutes with two wrenches
- Dual-grip, rubber-mounted handlebar minimizes

vibration

• Operator presence control system adds safety by stopping the cutter wheel in less than six seconds



Circle 209 on reader service form

Vista Lighting's Ballast Boxes

- 120-volt, highintensity discharge ballast boxes now feature waterproof compartments for above-ground fixture installations
- Constructed from glass-reinforced polymer to withstand a range of environmental conditions
- Boxes are injection molded with heavy wall construction

Circle 210 on reader service form



Briggs & Stratton Vanguard OHV

- The 6-hp, OHV engine features a singlecylinder, horizontal shaft
- The Magnetron electronic ignition system ensures easy starts, and a two-stage Dual-Clean air cleaner assures consistent performance during use
- Engine is 10 percent lighter than comparable 35-pound models
- A central spark plug layout on the engine improves combustion
- Overhead valve design with 11.1-cubicinch displacement and dura-bore cast iron cylinder sleeve minimize maintenance
- 20.3-ounce fuel tank for longer run times

Circle 211 on reader service form

Shaver Mfg. StumpBuster

- Designed for use with skid-steer loaders and small tractors that have a three-point hitch
- The SC-25 unit is PTO powered with a cutting wheel reaching 980 rpm
- Single-direction cutting for aggressive cutting pattern
- Grinds stumps 10 inches below ground

- SC-25H unit has a ¾-inch-thick cutting wheel
- 24-inch cutting wheel and high hub torque cut a 55-degree pass 10 inches deep in less than two minutes
- Requires a 15-gpm hydraulic hookup
- Unit is easily maneuvered around buildings, fences, trees, etc.
- Single-direction cutting minimizes stress on cylinders, bearings and gear boxes

Circle 212 on reader service form

Products

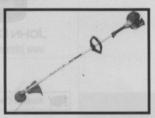
Woodstream Corp.'s Deer-Off

- Simple spray treatment
- Keeps deer and other feeding animals away from plants, shrubs, saplings and flowers for up to three months
- All-natural formula is EPA-approved for use on fruits, vegetables and all crops
- Adhesive base keeps product from washing off with normal precipitation
- Comes in packaging from 16 ounces to 55 gallons

Circle 213 on reader service form

RedMax BCZ2400 Trimmer

• Engine meets emission standards without a catalytic converter



- Increased reliability by building an engine with fewer moving parts
- Strato-Charged engine controls the stratified charge with a piston port rather than a reed valve that opens and closes

Circle 214 on reader service form

Shindaiwa Cutoff Saws

- The EC7500 with a 12-inch wheel capacity and the EC7500 with a 14-inch wheel capacity are both powered by a 73.5-cc displacement, 3.6-kw engine
- Features a high torque transmission
- A sealed side cover encloses the multi-V ribbed belt and includes a quick adjustment system
- An external indicator verifies proper belt tension
- Standard 22-mm arbor size converts to 20-mm and 25.4-mm widths with adapters included with both saws
- A recoil starter system is engineered to seal off migrating dust, which helps protect the recoil from premature failure
- Operators can rotate the drive train from standard inline cutting to flush cutting in a few minutes
- The saws feature an ergonomically designed front handle and a full, six-point A/V system
- The equipment's specially designed DAS 3-stage air filter system prevents abrasive concerete dust from leaking into the saws' carburetors
- These two equipment models are now available to international customers

Circle 215 on reader service form

Loegering Snow Blowers

- Five snow blower attachments for loaders with intake widths from 48 to 85 inches
- The new LSB48 model with a 48-inch intake, a 30-foot throwing distance, a 14-inch auger and a 670-pound weight



- Loegering's impeller design draws in only as much snow as it can throw to balance rpm and torque for maximum throw distance
- Reversible auger and impeller design expels obstructions without requiring operator to exit the loader
- Hydraulically driven chute, auger, impeller and deflector allows for easy adjustment

Circle 216 on reader service form

Hustler Z Zero-Turn Mower

- Available with a 52-, 60- and 72-inch deck
- Engine options include a 23-hp Kawasaki, a 25-hp Kawasaki and a 24-hp Honda
- Lifetime warranty on the front edge of the mowing deck and the tractor frame
- Six anti-scalp wheels provide quality finish
- More than 12 gallons of on-board fuel
- \bullet Mowing heights range from 1 inch to 5 inches in ¼-inch increments and are adjusted with a foot-operated deck lift system
- Parking brake automatically engages when mower is parkedsteering handles are put in the off position (folded out)

Circle 217 on reader service form

Stihl 4-Mix Units

- The STIHL 4-MIX engine design offers operators the benefits of both 2-stroke and 4-stroke engines
- Meets CARB and EPA Phase 2 standards
- Runs on a 50-to-1 fuel mix, eliminating the need for a separate oil chamber
- Weighs only 6 ounces more than the 2-stroke engine
- Engine is 20 percent more fuel efficient, has 5 percent more power and 16 percent more torque than the 2-stroke engine

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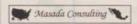
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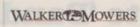
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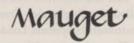
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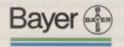


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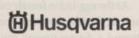
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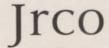
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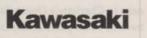
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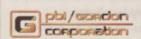
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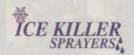


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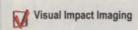


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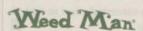
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Product Profile

Charlotte 'Bands' **Against Cankerworm**

Charlotte, N.C., is a town with more than 500,000 people and beautifully tree-lined streets. That may be why North Carolina's largest city continues to grow as businesses relocate to this commercial hub.

All of the new settlers aren't human, however. One, in particular, is a pest that is making its presence known almost as much as the auto racing teams that call Charlotte "home" - the fall cankerworm.

The fall cankerworm (Alsophila pometaria) isn't a fussy diner - any tree will do. But willow oaks (Quercus phellos), which contribute a great deal to Charlotte's scenic streets, rank high on its menu.

The cankerworm hatches in April from eggs laid on the tender branch ends of its host tree. The larvae immediately begin dining on the leaves and go though three instars until they are approximately 1½-inches long.

After filling up on green leaves, the caterpillars lower themselves on silken threads to the ground where they pupate until the first frost.

Upon emerging, the flightless female adult begins an ascent up the tree. Along the way, she mates with a flying male and continues her journey up the tree to lay her eggs on the ends of small branches that cannot support birds and other predators.

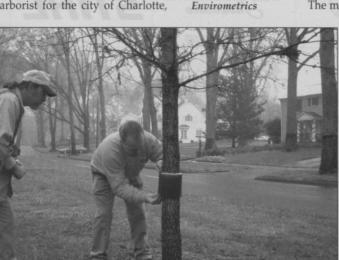
Lawn care operators can control the fall cankerworm at two points in its life cycle - while feeding as larva when it is susceptible to Bt (baccilus thuriniegensis) or while ascending as an adult female when it can be trapped by tree banding.

Don McSween, an arborist for the city of Charlotte,

noted that while he has used both methods in the past, he has relied on banding in the past two years.

Charlotte's traditional banding method was to wrap a tree with cotton or fiberglass insulation, which was pushed into bark crevices to keep the cankerworm from detouring around or beneath the tree band.

An effective application of the BugBarrier has been shown to stop as many as 9,000 fall cankerworms from laying eggs. Photo:



Builder's tarpaper would then be wrapped around the tree on top of the insulation and coated with a sticky substance called Tanglefoot. Unfortunately, the sticky coating attracted leaves, dust and other windborne debris, resulting in less area onto which the cankerworm could stick and reducing the wrap's effectiveness.

Many commercial arborists and landscape contractors have used the tarpaper method, but the reality is that the messy nature of the work makes the job unpleasant.

Last fall, McSween tested a new commercial product called the BugBarrier Tree Band, manufactured by Envirometrics Systems, London, Ontario, Canada.

The cankerworm kit consists of a polyfiber material, which lacks the itchy effect of fiberglass insulation, and a sticky polyfilm barrier. Arborists push the polyfiber into the crevices of furrowed tree bark with a putty knife, allowing it to protrude approximately 2 inches. Then, they remove the protective polyfilm layer from a sticky sheet and wrap it around the fiber with the sticky side facing the tree, hovering 3 inches below the fiber core.

As the egg-laden female cankerworm makes its way up the tree, the fiber barrier turns it back. Most cankerworms attempt a detour toward the translucent film barrier, to which they stick and are trapped.

McSween tested the BugBarrier Tree Band on 38 willow oaks in Charlotte's Queen Road West median and select trees in other parts of the city. Because this was a new product he installed the traditional tarpaper traps above the BugBarrier Tree Band as well. The new bands trapped more than 90 percent of the females, he reported.

The barriers were left in place throughout the fall migration period to see how many cankerworms one band could hold. When they were removed, the lowest count was 100 females and the highest was 9,000 - each carrying 100 to 200 eggs. As a result, up to 2 million defoliating cankerworms were prevented from hatching.

The most distasteful part of fabricating the traditional

barriers was applying the sticky material, McSween said. The BugBarrier, on the other hand, was considerably cleaner and easy to use with a two-step installation.

"I can't stress enough to individual homeowners and neighborhood organizations that the fall cankerworm is not just a city problem," McSween emphasized. "This is a problem that will continue to get worse unless we all make a concerted effort to control it." - Jim Thompson

The author is president of Envirometrics, London, Ontario and can be reached at 519/657-3873 or www.envirometrics.ca.

Circle 220 on reader service form

<u>Equipment Notebook</u>

WOOD WASTE

Chipping In

In this environmentally-conscious age, it isn't a good time to be a culprit of green waste. Most cities and states either ban yard waste altogether from municipal landfills or charge sizable fees for disposal. And most areas prohibit the burning of organic waste.

So, what's a landscape contractor to do? Many contractors already figured out the answer to this dilemma: Just chip it. "The chipping of wood waste is a proven economic method for disposal," explained Chris Nichols, product manager of environmental products for Vermeer Manufacturing, Pella, Iowa. "In some cases, waste product can actually be turned into a vital commodity for landscape contractors in the form of mulch or decoration."

AN ESSENTIAL TOOL. Despite the economic downturn – or maybe because of it – sales of brush chippers and shredders have grown. Ross Johnson, marketing manager of Crary Bear Cat Co., West Fargo, N.D., said the market to landscape contractors is growing steadily because they, and their clients, simply want to save money.

"More contractors are selling chipping and debris reduction as a service to their clients," Johnson explained. "As the landfill prices continue to rise, landscape contractors realize shredding debris before they haul it off-site is cost effective and, in many cases, the client will request that the landscape contractor leave the mulch on site."

The increase in the customer base for wood waste reduction has led to a rise in contractors offering the service, Nichols agreed, adding that Vermeer's brush chipper sales have increased over the last 18 to 24 months.

"From what I have heard from our customers, chipping work is available in many customer groups," Nichols shared. "Homeowners and commercial property owners need it for basic tree care, maintenance and take-downs. Land developers need the service for land clearing or site planning, and utility companies use it for line clearing."

Larry Petrasek, fleet administration manager, Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio, uses chippers to service a wide range of customer needs. "Commercial and residential clients call on us from spring to late fall, usually for tree or brush removal," he said. "We also do line clearing work for local power companies."

A BUYER'S GUIDE. When shopping for a chipper/shredder, knowing the basics of what's out there is vital.

Jerry Morey, marketing manger, Bandit Industries, Remus, Mich., said there are primarily three types of chippers available on the market: the conventional drum-style chipper, the hydraulic drum-style chipper and the hydraulic disc-style chipper.

The conventional drum-style chipper, which came on the market in the late 1940s, consists of a basic chipping drum without a feeding system. "This older style chipper is less in demand due to the superior performance of the newer style chippers," Morey stated. "In fact, less than 5 percent of the chippers built today are conventional drums."

Johnson explained the loss in demand might be due to the fact that newer models simply save time. "With hydraulic feed chippers, whole trees can be put through the chipper without cutting off the side branches," he said.

The hydraulic-feed, disc-style chippers came on the market in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Morey continued. Their drum-style counterparts came out in the early 1990s.

"In capacity ranges up to 14 inches, the hydraulic-feed, disc-style units have been more popular because of their productivity and their lower owning and operating costs," Morey explained. "The disc-style chipper will process material effectively while using significantly less horse-power and fuel to chip the same amount of material as a drum chipper. Disc-style chippers cut at a fixed angle (approximately 45 degrees) and therefore chip using less fuel and experience less vibration."

Morey added that hydraulic-feed, drum-style chippers also have their advantages. "For the size of the machine, especially with larger capacity units, the opening is generally larger, which allows for more limbs to be processed," he described. "These units produce more vibration and use more fuel because of their larger openings and because they cut on an arc across the grain."

After these basic designs, chipper/shredders come in a

Years ago, burning was an accepted method of wood disposal, but today's society requires more environmentally friendly processing methods.

Photo: Vermeer



Equipment Notebook

variety of sizes and options. The maximum capacity for each model varies depending on the largest branch diameter it can handle. Smaller chippers, for 3- or 5-inch branches, and much larger units big enough to handle whole trees are available for commercial use, Johnson advised. "In almost every application, 9 inches and under will handle the needs of the client," he said.

A WORTHWHILE BUY. The cost of adding a chipper/shredder to a business will range depending on what each buyer needs because model prices change accordingly with size, options and horsepower.

Chippers can come with or without a shredding mechanism, depending on what uses the contractor has in mind. Johnson noted that in using a chipper with a shredding/grinding mechanism, a contractor can make mulch that can sometimes be used directly on the site.

"Using the mulch on site helps the landscape contractor by reducing debris," Johnson articulated. "If the client wants the mulch used on his site, the nutrients go back into the earth rather than a dump site."

While shredders can make mulching easier, some contractors do not need the extra function. "If you're not interested in shredding to make mulch, there are chippers in various sizes with which you can just reduce the volume of branches to manageable wood chips," Johnson said.

In addition to the shredder option, chippers come with transport, attachment and engine size options. A blower attachment can speed up chip cleanup, and a vacuum attachment can help mulch dead leaves and branches lying on the ground. For towing, some models hitch to the back of trucks whereas others can attach to an on-the-job skid steer. Engines can range anywhere from 13 to 250 horsepower.

With all of these choices, Nichols suggested contractors examine the work the machine will encounter before buying.

"Chippers used by landscape contractors and tree services will generally start in the \$10,000 price range for a 6-inch diameter

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Check this article online for chipper maintenance tips.

capacity model and can run up to \$50,000 for the larger 18-inch units, which have the capability of chipping significantly larger diameter material," Morey stated. "Larger grinders and waste reduction machines range in price from \$175,000 to \$500,000, depending on the capacity, horsepower and volume that the machines will produce."

Johnson added that smaller chipper/shredders can start at around \$1,500, depending on the options.

Although a chipper/shredder may seem too pricey for some contractors, Morey said, "The cost can be justified by the reduction in disposal costs and dumping fees."

The author is Contributing Editor, Lawn & Landscape, and can be reached through nwisniewski@lawnandlandscape.com.

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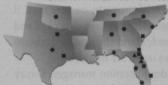


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The name of the publisher is: Bob West, 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399. The name of the editor is: Bob West, 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399.

The owners are: Richard J.W. Foster, 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399, Maureen Mertz, 4012 Bridge Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44113-3399 and Publishers Printing Press, 100 Frank E. Simon, Shepherdsville, Kentucky, 40165.

Average number of copies of each issue during preceding 12 months, and of single issues nearest to filing date, respectively, are as follows: Total number of copies printed (net press run) 74,302/72,784; paid circulation sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales 0; mail subscriptions 66,107/62,165; total paid and/or requested circulation 66,107/62,165; free distribution by mail, carrier or other means (samples, complimentary or other free copies) 8,194/10,619; total distribution 74,302/72,784; copies not distributed (office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing) 0; and returned from news agent 0.

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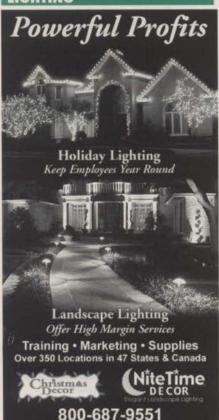
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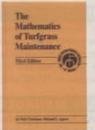
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NOVEMBER 2002

How We Do It

Marketing with Flags at Quality Seasons

About three years ago, I was doing an estimate for a client when I saw a realtor's business card attached to a flag stuck inside the client' screen door. Immediately, that gave me an idea.

For the Fourth of July that year, I ordered 5,000 6-inch-by-9-inch cloth American flags at 44 cents a piece and distributed about 2,000 of them with a "Compliments of Quality Seasons" card attached. We used five teams of two people to pass out the flags on a Saturday morning to most of our maintenance clients and their neighbors as well as in areas where we wanted to grow our business.

These flags were posted in addition to signs required by law for clients who received pesticide or fertilizer applications, but our flags were much more appreciated. Seeing the flags lining the street that week for the holiday was exciting for us. Even more thrilling was talking to folks on the street and realizing that the flags were the topic of conversation at block parties and other client get-togethers.

We distribute flags for two reasons – first as a thank you to clients and second, as a marketing opportunity to increase our exposure in certain neighborhoods. As a result, we earn appreciation and new orders. Though we have not tracked exactly how many additional clients or add-on services we gain through the flags, I would say we easily pay for our time and the results more than make up

FIVE KEYS TO Marketing with Flags

- 1. Buy flags in bulk to get the best price.
- Attach a simple note to the flag to make sure current and potential clients know where the flag came from.
- Use flags to thank current clients and market to potential clients.
- Have crews distribute flags after they finish work on maintenance accounts during the week of July 4.
- In addition to distributing flags on the Fourth of July, pass them out to clients at other times of the year when waving American flags is encouraged.

for our effort and the cost involved.

For example, President George Bush declared Sept. 14, 2001, a "National Day of Prayer and Remembrance" to honor 9/11 victims and

urged all Americans to show their support by hanging American flags. The stores were sold out quickly, so many clients called to ask if they could buy a flag from us. We checked our supply and found we had several hundred flags left over from the Fourth of July. So, two employees volunteered to distribute the flags to all of our regular maintenance clients the night of Sept. 13. The clients woke up to find an American flag in their front yard. They may not have had time to put a flag out, didn't own a flag or forgot, but we thought of it for them.

The response was overwhelming. We had clients calling all day thanking us or sending thank-you notes. They were overjoyed because they wanted to show their patriotism, but could not due to the flag shortage.

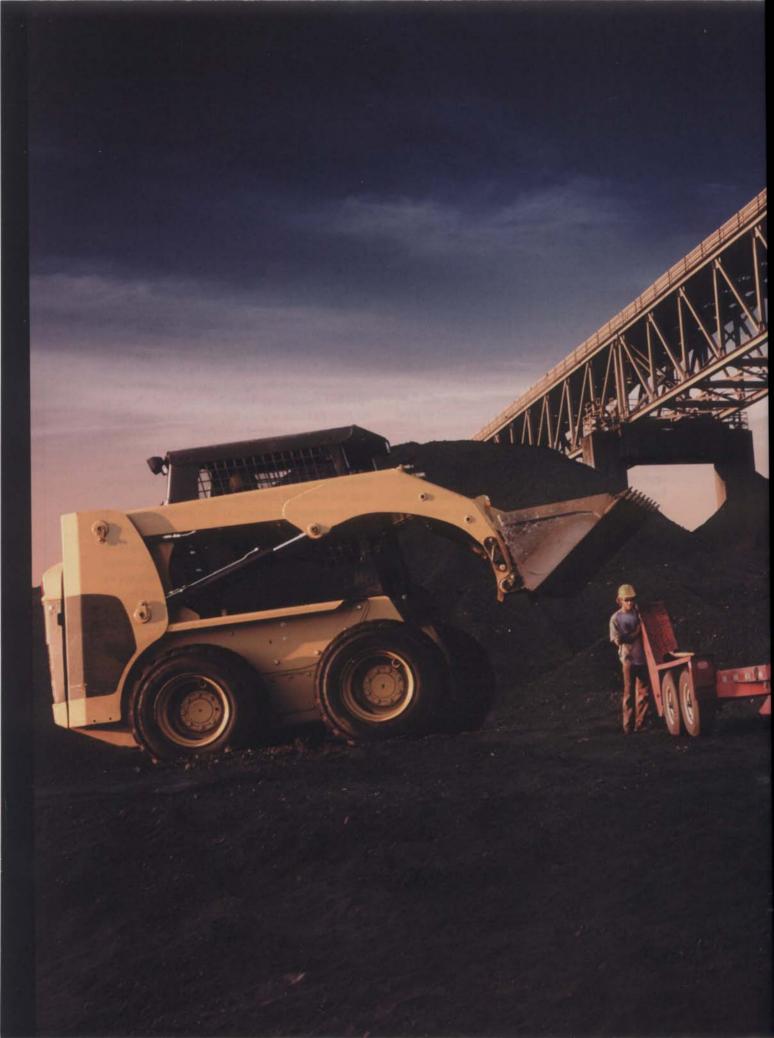
Unfortunately, since Sept. 11, flag prices have gone up considerably, meaning that in 2002 we couldn't distribute as many flags as we wanted. The least expensive flag of the same quality I could find this year was 78 cents. So, instead of trying to generate additional business with the flags, we mostly used them to thank our current clients and to mark the end of summer because this is the time when we are starting to sell add-on aeration and fall services.

Also, to save money this year since flag prices went up, we decided to have regular crews deliver flags to clients the week of July 4 as they finished their work on each account. Though not all of our clients received a flag, those who were serviced during that week did and this made it affordable for us to deliver and still please regular maintenance clients. Plus, clients' neighbors still saw how we treat our current clients, and this, in itself, was a marketing tool.

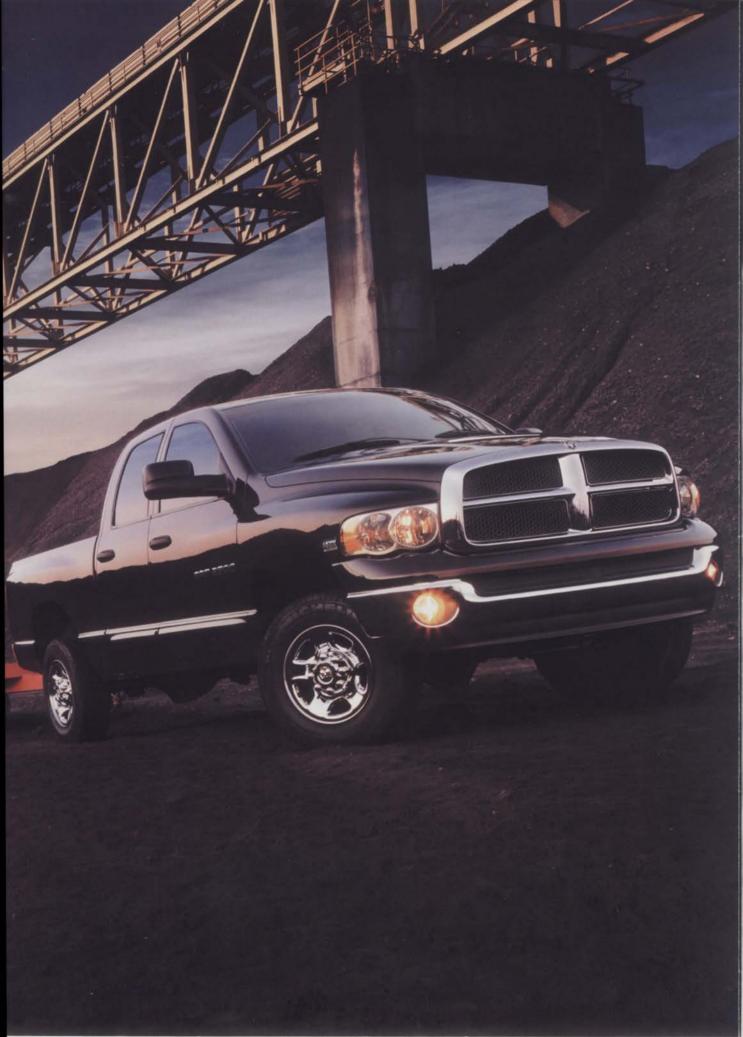
We are always looking for ways to be creative when thanking our clients for their business and getting our name in front of new faces. Our goal is not only to get our name out but to put smiles on clients' faces at the same time. Since we started distributing these flags, I think we won the hearts of several hundred folks in the community in which we work, so we will definitely continue this client relation and marketing crusade in the future. – Derek Blumberg

The author is president, Quality Seasons, Savage, Minn., and can be reached at derek@qualityseasons.com.





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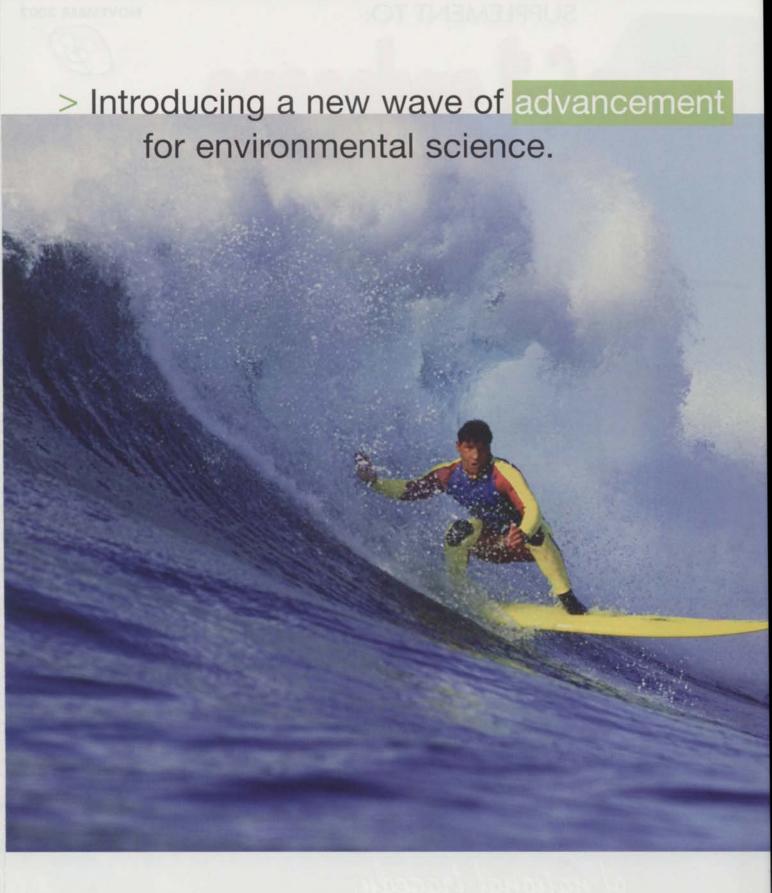
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2002 LEADERSHIP

Dear Green Industry Professional:

I am pleased to address you for the first time as the recently appointed vice president of the Chipco Professional Products group of Bayer Environmental Science. While my title in itself isn't necessarily important, my appointment does provide my team and I with the unique opportunity to serve you as Bayer Environmental Science. We want to be your partner for growth. What does this opportunity mean to you?

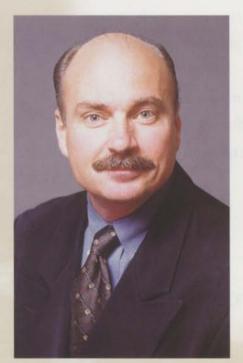
It means that our focus is to exceed your expectations. I encourage you to talk with one of us today, or anytime you can, to discuss your needs as a professional in the green industry.

It means we are drawing upon our extensive research capabilities to develop

innovative and novel technologies that will help you better meet your customers' needs.

It means we will partner with distribution, the research community, government and regulatory agencies, the associations that make this industry thrive—and with you, our customers—to develop the kind of responsible, reduced-risk tools you need to be successful in today's changing business climate.

It means that we are working to assure your success. Whether it be through our Accolades® customer rewards program, scholarship initiatives, end-user education or comprehensive and convenient product



Dan Carrothers

N/ARDS

training, we are working to provide you with excellent technical service, as well as support you with the kind of education and guidance you need now and in the future.

It means we will continue to provide you with the high-quality, dependable products you are used to today, including Merit®, Compass™, Sevin®, DeltaGard® and Tempo®.

We recognize that it's challenging to operate in today's business climate, one of constant and rapid change. To be successful, all of us must have the ability to anticipate marketplace changes and to respond to those changes positively and quickly. We must empower our employees by providing them with the tools they need to meet and exceed customer needs. It is with this entrepreneurial spirit that the recipients of the 2002

Leadership Awards have led their organizations to greater professional heights while serving as inspirations for the entire lawn care industry.

Together with Lawn & Landscape magazine, we at Bayer Environmental Science would like to congratulate this year's winners. Everyone here at Bayer Environmental Science thanks you for your continued support and looks forward to our partnership with you and the growth that will result — for all of us.

Best regards,

Vice President

Chipco Professional Products

Bayer Environmental Science, North America

To be successful,

all of us must have the ability to anticipate marketplace changes and to respond to those changes positively and quickly.—

Dan Carrothers,

vice president,
Chipco Professional
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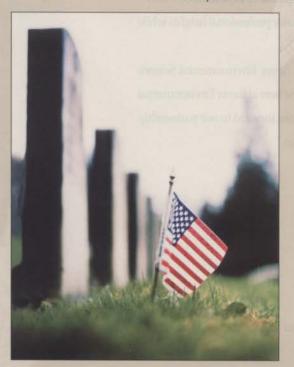
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Lawn & Landscape 2002 Leadership award supplement design created by Andrea Vagas, GIE Media.

Aboue

Leaders in lawn care answer the call of duty in a time of national tragedy.

BEYOND



Seven years ago when Phil Fogarty brought together a few colleagues to spend a day volunteering at Arlington Cemetery, he had no idea what the day would come to mean. Compelled by a sense of patriotic pride, Fogarty and other members of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) first completed a volunteer lime application at the historic landmark in 1996 as part of the association's

"We just hoped we wouldn't get snowed out," recalls Fogarty, owner, Weed Man, Cleveland, Ohio, and coordinator of PLCAA's activities at Arlington. "Back then our Day on the Hill was in February and we were told not to plan on anything in D.C. at that time of year. We did anyway."

Day on the Hill activities.

But in July 2002, tending to burial ground occupied by fallen heroes from the September 11, 2001, attack on the Pentagon, with the sounds of repair work on the nearby building reverberating through Arlington's hallowed ground, none of the 140 volunteers had to search very long for the meaning in what they were doing.

"We are all emotional people and when you have a chance to be a part of something like this, it's all emotion. It's about where things could be if these heroes weren't in place to defend us. Getting up to push a spreader around a cemetery becomes an honor, not a chore," says Fogarty, a 1999 Lawn & Landscape Leadership Award winner. "And we get a chance to make the lawn care industry shine in a way that you couldn't in any other way. It isn't about regulatory issues anymore, it's about how much value a piece of lawn can bring to the meaning of life for everybody."

Now in its sixth year, the "Renewal and Remembrance" Cemetery Project at Arlington has blossomed into a full-fledged volunteer effort, contributing more than \$40,000 worth of grounds maintenance and tree work. The program is associated with PLCAA's Legislative Day on the Hill and combines volunteer liming and tree work — this year a record 130 acres were covered — with legislative visits.

"This year was special," said PLCAA President Bill Hoopes, Scotts LawnService, Marysville, Ohio, and a 2001 Lawn & Landscape Leadership Award winner. "It was our first visit since 9/11. As I told those gathered at the opening ceremony: 'Those killed on 9/11, some of whom are buried here at Arlington, are not victims. Victims have bad luck and lose. There are no losers at Arlington...only heroes.' Through the volunteer work at Arlington, we honored our heroes and sent them our message of respect and admiration."

This year's program had special meaning as well for Arlington's Superintendent John Metzler. The ill-fated jet passed just 20 feet above Metzler's office at Arlington on its way

WORDS OF THANKS

This letter was sent to PLCAA volunteers by John Meztler Jr., superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery.

"Please extend my heartfelt thanks to the membership of PLCAA for another successful Renewal and Remembrance at Arlington National Cemetery.

Your partnership with the cemetery in honoring those who served our nation has never been more relevant. PLCAA members have again selflessly donated their valuable time, expertise, equipment and supplies in caring for Arlington's hallowed grounds. Through the years, PLCAA members have improved the turfgrass of Civil War, World War, and Korean and Vietnam War gravesites. And now their efforts lend beauty and dignity to the final resting places of those who died in the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

Please pass along a special thanks to Phil Fogarty, Tom Delaney and everyone who braved the heat and worked so hard on July 22nd. Their efforts are never taken for granted, and their spirit of giving is always an inspiration."

to a tragic collision with the Pentagon. When the plane hit, Metzler was knocked from his chair by the impact of the plane. And tragically, the attack took the life of a man working in the Pentagon with whom Metzler carpooled to work each day.

"After the work was mostly complete,

I walked out into the grassy meadowland, only a few hundred yards from the Pentagon," Hoopes wrote in a recent PLCAA newsletter. "And, as I stood there studying the flight path, looking first at the hotel over which the plane flew on its fatal and final approach, then back across the new gravestones to the



rebuilt Pentagon just across the hot, asphalt-paved street, I could barely comprehend what had happened

Arlington Cemetery HALLOWED GROUND FOR HONORED HEROES

More than 4 million people visit Arlington Cemetery annually, many coming to pay final respects at graveside services, of which nearly 100 are conducted each week, Monday through Friday.

Arlington Mansion and the 200 acres of ground immediately surrounding it were designated officially as a military cemetery on June 15, 1864, by Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. More than 260,000 people are buried at Arlington Cemetery. Veterans from all the nation's wars are buried in the cemetery, from the American Revolution through the Persian Gulf War

Arlington National Cemetery and Soldiers Home National Cemetery are administered by the Department of the Army. All other National Cemeteries are administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, or the National Park Service.

Arlington House (Custis-Lee Mansion) and the grounds in its immediate vicinity are administered by the National Park Service.

The flags in Arlington National Cemetery are flown at half-staff from a half-hour before the first funeral until a half-hour after the last funeral each day. Funerals are normally conducted five days a week, excluding weekends. Funerals, including interments and inumments, average 20 a day.

With more than 260,000 people buried, Arlington National Cemetery has the secondlargest number of people buried of any national cemetery in the United States. Arlington National Cemetery conducts approximately 5,400 burials each year.

The Tomb of the Unknowns is one of the more-visited sites at Arlington National Cemetery. The Tomb is made from Yule marble quarried in Colorado. It consists of seven pieces, with a total weight of 79 tons. The Tomb was completed and opened to the public April 9, 1932, at a cost of \$48,000

MORE ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY FACTS:

- Pvt. William Henry Christman, 67th Pennsylvania Infantry, first military service man interred in Arlington National Cemetery, May 13, 1864.
- · Pvt. William Blatt, 49th Pennsylvania Infantry, first battle casualty interred, Saturday, May 14, 1864.
- Two Unknown Union Soldiers were interred on May 15, 1864. They were the first of nearly 5,000 unknowns now resting in Arlington National Cemetery.
- . The first graves in Arlington National Cemetery were dug by James Parks, a former Arlington Estate slave. Buried in Section 15. James Parks is the only person buried in Arlington National Cemetery who was born on the property.
- About 1,500 United States Colored Troops are interred in section 27. The first black combat soldiers of the Civil War.
- · In addition to casualties of war and honored war and military veterans, dignitaries buried at Arlington include: explorer Robert Peary, Presidents William Howard Taft and John Kennedy and U.S. Chief Justices Oliver Wendell Holmes, Earl Warren, Potter Stewart, Thurgood Marshall, William Douglas and Arthur Joseph Goldberg.

Source: Information from the Arlington National Cemetery, www.arlingtoncemetery.org.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS.

there."

The poignancy of this year's Renewal and Remembrance program is the culmination of an idea inspired more than a half-decade ago. Fogarty co-hosted a radio show in Cleveland with a prominent arborist. "He talked about the value of trees and I talked about the value of turf and we would argue on the air about who was more important," Fogarty says.

In one of those broadcasts, the arborist talked about various activities of arborists associations and one was an event at Arlington. "So I took my family to Arlington and Superintendent Metzler took us around to all the sites and showed us what the arborists had done," Fogarty said.

Fogarty took the idea to PLCAA and after a year and a half of lobbying, committee work, board approval and coordination with Arlington, the program began in 1996. "The PLCAA staff



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Lawn care professionals looking to get involved in PLCAA's Day on the Hill and Renewal and Remembrance program need merely contact PLCAA at 800/458-3466. For more information, you can also visit the association's Web site at www.plcaa.org.

The next Day on the Hill is scheduled for July 14-15, 2003.

A volunteer applies lime during the Professional Lawn Care Association of America's annual Renewal and Remembrance at Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, D.C.

"Getting up to push a spreader around a cemetery becomes an honor, not a chore. And we get a chance to make the lawn care industry shine in a way that you couldn't in any other way. It isn't about regulatory issues anymore, it's about how much value a piece of lawn can bring to the meaning of life for everybody." — Phil Fogarty, coordinator of PLCAA's Renewal and Remembrance program at Arlington National Cemetery.

works their heart out to make the event happen every year," Fogarty says.

AMBITIOUS FUTURE.

Each year the program has expanded. For example, PLCAA volunteers have begun annual work at historic Congressional Cemetery, working to refurbish the entire 38-acre grounds, where members of Congress, vice presidents and other dignitaries are buried. Fogarty hopes the program will

similarly expand in years to come. "Through service we can really make a statement about who we are," he says.

"We could do all of Arlington if we had more member companies contribute equipment and volunteers. And what if we started taking on America's front lawn, the Mall?" The Mall, a green space between the U.S. Capitol Building and the Washington Monument, needs grounds maintenance attention.

"It is in terrible shape," Fogarty says.

"What if started doing things like that? How much positive attention could our industry garner off of being the caretakers of our capitol's lawn?"

Fogarty adds, "That's the way D.C. was designed, long stretches of lawn for people to enjoy and vistas to see. That's what I would love for our association to be known for — that when people talk about lawn care, they know it is the industry that promotes the green of Washington, D.C."

CAN DO TIT!

FING SCHOOL, 1989

HEIGHTS EVEREST,

GRUBS TREATED WITH MERIT, 2001

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As a
lawn care
professional
and New
York City
fireman,
Vincent
Tummino
reflects on
the events of
September
11, 2001.

The morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Vincent Tummino was winding down from a night shift at Staten Island, N.Y.'s Battalion 22 firehouse. A 32-year veteran of the department, Tummino is a battalion firefighter and one of the 100 highest-ranked firefighters in the city. Chatting with the officer who was relieving him, Tummino's tired eyes shifted back into focus when the firehouse television station began blaring reports of an accident at the World Trade Center, just a 5-mile ferry ride across the Lower Bay from Tummino's firehouse. "My first response was that it was probably one of those helicopters taking pictures or a small sightseeing plane that just got too close," Tummino recalls.

But as the morning unfolded, a nightmare was transmitted on live television as Tummino and the rest of the nation watched. "You didn't want to believe that this could happen. We didn't want to face that it was a terrorist attack." But all too quickly, Tummino and the rest of the firemen in Battalion 22 knew that the worst-case scenario had become reality. "The phone in my office was ringing off the hook and everybody was scrambling," Tummino says. After answering frantic phone calls and trying to organize the chaos in the firehouse he directed, Tummino caught a ferry to Ground Zero.

"By the time I got there the buildings had already collapsed, so I'm here to tell the story.

"As I was making my way to Ground Zero, smoke was billowing out. At that point I had a tremendous amount of anger in me, but I had a job to do," Tummino recalls. "I hoped to get there and find a lot of injured people and help rescue them by digging them out. To do anything just to save lives. But, I was totally disappointed when I got to Ground Zero. There was not a person to be found. There was not a bird flying in the air. Every car and building in the area was on fire and the dust was 6 inches thick for 2 miles around."

THE AFTERMATH

Like so many of us, Tummino's hopes were dashed on September 11, as an eerie stillness persisted where the vibrant World Trade Center once stood. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, Tummino worked 63 hours straight on one of the now famous bucket brigades. And after a few hours of rest, he spent the next 30 days working 24-hour on/off shifts. "You would go to one funeral in the morning and another in the afternoon. Then, the next day, you had to go to work. You just lived in a uniform for months."

On September 11, Tummino lost one of his best friends, a cousin, two men in his firehouse, as well as more than 50 other firemen who he knew personally. "We were hit hard. But a leader doesn't give up the fight and say it's too hard. He just keeps striving," Tummino says.



Vincent Tummino, left, with Charles Campbell, fire chief, Fort Myer, Va., during a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, D.C.

And more than a year later, Tummino strives on to remind us of the sacrifice made by his friends. "Nobody dies in vain. This is the reason I continue to talk about this, to keep the spirit of all the victims alive. To make sure America

Tummino speaks at nearly one event every two weeks, whether it be the dedication of a new memorial statue or at events like the Professional Lawn Care Association of America's Renewal and Remembrance event at Arlington National Cemetery.

A PART-TIME SUCCESS STORY

doesn't forget."

A former member of PLCAA's board of directors, Tummino first entered the lawn care industry in 1981 as a "part-time" owner of a Lawn Doctor franchise in Middlesex and Union counties in New Jersey. "In 1981, I wanted, as most firemen do, a second job to supplement my income for my family," Tummino says. Firemen often have several days off at a time and after seeing an article about Lawn Doctor franchises, Tummino bought an existing branch with about 240 customers.

"I got into a contest with myself and would say, 'Let me get 300 customers.' Then it was 500 customers, and so and so on."

Tummino sold the business in January 2001 with more than 3,000 customers. "Iwas at a point

in my life—I was 55 at the time—where I was ready to sell. At what point do you say a \$1 million is no longer worth anything to you? When you are 90 years old in a nursing home, it doesn't mean anything to you," Tummino says.

Throughout his career in lawn care, Tummino was very active in industry groups, such as the New Jersey Turfgrass Association and the Alliance for Environmental Concern.

In particular, Tummino led industry fights against unreasonable insurance rates in the mid-1980s and an initiative to fight double taxation in New Jersey. Spearheaded by Tummino, the lawn care industry in New Jersey avoided paying tax twice on lawn care materials.

"I believe that some people are put on earth to be leaders and I think I am a born leader. A lot of the things that I did in my life, I was leading them."

FOR LOVE OF THE JOB

Though Tummino sold his Lawn Doctor franchise nearly two years ago, he continues to stop by his old office once a week to help out in a consultant role. But his true love, and a job he continues today, is being a New York City fireman. "I love the job. It was one of the reasons I sold my private business, even though I probably earned three times more than my salary in the fire department," Tummino says.

At 20 years seniority, NYC firefighters are eligible to retire and take a pension. But 12 years after his eligibility, Tummino continues, working at less than half the pay he is entitled to. "Sept. 11 just confirmed that this is the greatest job in the world. The camaraderie of the men is special. We were always America's heroes, it just took Sept. 11, to awaken the public to that fact," Tummino said.

In an age of increased uncertainty and the potential threat of ongoing terrorist attacks, Tummino points out that the value of police and fire personnel is even more relevant. "Every city's first line of defense is their firemen and policemen, because they are the first there."

A TIME TO HEAL

In reflecting on the events of Sept. 11, 2001, Tummino says he tries to focus on the healing and the positives. "I wake up every morning and I try not to think about it. I try to think about the healing part of it. I am happy that I am able to talk about the heroic acts of these firemen."

Further, Tummino says he's touched by the outpouring of emotion from his fellow Americans. "The people of America are helping us with the healing process by coming to New York City and calling and writing us. We are thankful for that."

We, too, are thankful for men like Vinny Tummino, truly "America's finest" — everyday heroes that make our nation a better place to live.

Former winners of a Lawn & Landscape/Chipco
Professional Products Leadership Award share their
thoughts on leadership.

Thoughts ON LEADERSHIP

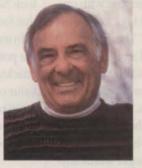
TOM LIED

LIED'S LANDSCAPE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT Sussex, Wis.

Leadership Class of 2000 Effective leadership is the key ingredient for success in each of our companies, our industry, our country, every religious and service organization

and, of course, our family.

A good leader is able to develop an exciting and valuable vision of goals and the activities necessary to realize those



goals. A leader can communicate that vision in a way that excites every member in the organization and energizes them to work together to accomplish the goals. A great leader can make the journey to accom-

plishment of the vision rewarding and pleasurable to the entire organization.

We in the landscape industry are blessed with leaders who not only have developed exciting visions, but also are willing to modify those visions as our clients' requirements change. Perhaps that is the reason our industry has recently earned a new position of respect in the business community.

MARK SCHLOSSBERG

PRO-LAWN-PLUS

Baltimore, Md.

Leadership Class of 1999

Leadership in an organization consists of several parts. One part is setting an example for your employees and staff about what your company stands for. This includes setting up and following through on your organization's goals and objectives—not just with numbers, but also with your attitude toward dealing with your customers.

Another part of leadership is having the ability to find good leaders to work for you and be able to really delegate decision-making authority to them.

The third part of leadership in an organization is to be able to look into the future and foresee changes on the horizon. Then you should be able to prepare your organization for those

BRUCE HUNT

THE BRICKMAN GROUP

Long Grove, III.

Leadership Class of 2001

Leadership is a talent for creating an environment or culture in which people strive to make their very best efforts and contributions to a specific set of goals or outcomes. In today's world, effective leaders look outwardly, in comparison to managers who look inwardly, and see their role as that of creating a vision for their businesses.

Once the vision is created and clearly articulated, the leader works with the people within the organization by coaching and mentoring to focus on that vision. Leaders clearly set the expectations and monitor their teams' efforts towards the achievement of those expectations through superior performance.

changes well in advance. These are the attributes of leadership I feel are most important.

TIM DOPPEL

ATWOOD LAWN CARE INC.

Sterling Heights, Mich.

Leadership Class of 1999



Leadership requires having a vision, being able to communicate that vision and having the courage to enact the vision. Having a vision is much more than just having

a dream. Everyone has a dream, but precious few get out of bed and start working to make the dream a vision.

In order to see your vision take life, you need help. Communicating that vision to family members, friends, employees and colleagues is critical to seeing your vision take flight. In order for those parties to want to become vested in your vision, they need to see themselves in your vision. If you can find a way to paint that picture with them in it, they'll help you succeed.

But ultimately, the leader has to forge a path for others to follow. That requires courage to be just different enough from the pack so you get noticed. It may require being innovative, politically incorrect or a risk taker when everyone is being conventional, safe or acceptable.

If you believe in your vision and believe in yourself, you'll soon be recognized as the leader that you are.

LAURIE BROCCOLO

BROCCOLO TREE & LAWN CARE

Rochester, N.Y.

Leadership Class of 1999

So many great ideas are wasted because no one took the initiative to try them.

GEORGE MORRELL

THE MORRELL
LANDSCAPE GROUP

Atlanta, Ga.

Leadership Class of 2000

Having bought a company and having it survive when so many others failed takes leadership. Was it my leadership or was it the leadership of those who I chose to work with me?

It was both.

Great leaders set standards, find others who will accept those standards and then set even higher ones. Great leaders recognize the natural abilities of others, give them the responsibilities, empower them to do their jobs, support their efforts and then get out of the way.

Leaders demonstrate what can be done. Leaders build upon others' ideas, creating a snowball effect that pulls everyone around them together, growing into something big!

Go ahead and tell a leader that something cannot be done. They'll show you that not only can it be done, but even you can do it and they'll have you believing that it was your idea all along.

Leaders help you grow.

WAYNE RICHARDS

CAGWIN & DORWARD

Novato, Calif.
Leadership
Class of 2000
Much is said today about the importance of leadership and the effect it has on business. Tradition-

ally, much focus was placed on the "Heroic Leader," distinguished as a central

figurehead who established the plan and got things done. Effective leadership is much more than this. In fact, the "Heroic Leader" can actually be a detriment to an organization unless learning and leadership is occurring at multiple levels of the enterprise.

Leaders are good listeners, communicators and proponents of team interaction. They work with others to develop a shared vision and a core set of values, which serves as a foundation for all decision-making. While generally not charismatic, they are acutely aware of the capacities of their resources and are able to bring out the best in their people. A leader understands the key to success is taking the time to involve others in decision-making, implementation and the celebration of success. An effective leader is a role model and one who continues to work on personal mastery.

A great leader creates a safe environment for learning, experimentation and innovation.

BILL HOOPES

SCOTTS LAWNSERVICE

Marysville, Ohio
Leadership
Class of 2001
Leadership can be
defined in many
ways.

A leader is an inspirational person who achieves goals and objec-



tives through others, for example.

I believe the description of a true leader should include another trait—dedication. True leaders like those selected this year [as part of the Lawn & Landscape / Chipco Professional Products Leadership Awards], demonstrate dedication to high personal and professional values and stan-

dards. That to me makes the success they have enjoyed even sweeter.

Rules for
picking people
from a
new book
examining
Colin Powell's
leadership
style.

How will you accomplish great deeds? "Only by attracting the best people," says Colin Powell.

Effective business leaders know exactly what Powell is talking about. Michael Dell says that attracting and retaining top talent is a key strategic priority for Dell Computer. Bill Gates is equally explicit. For years, he has asserted that Microsoft must always hire the smartest, most capable people. Even if there's no specific job open for them at the moment, Gates has said, hire them anyway. With guidance from leaders, they'll define their own job, and good things will happen.

The best people will develop the best ideas and the most effective follow-ups. They will develop the right technology and the optimal application for it. They will figure out how to use available resources to connect with one another to develop the most exciting products, the most extraordinary cost reductions, the most dazzling customer services, the most lucrative niches, and the most promising investment opportunities. They'll help you define and attain your mission in ways you couldn't have dreamed of on your own.

So, Powell says, surround yourself with great people. In the emerging knowledge economy, the winning organizations will be the ones with the best minds, the most cutting-edge competencies, the greatest imaginations, the fastest reaction time, and the strongest competitive streak — in other words, the ones with the best people.

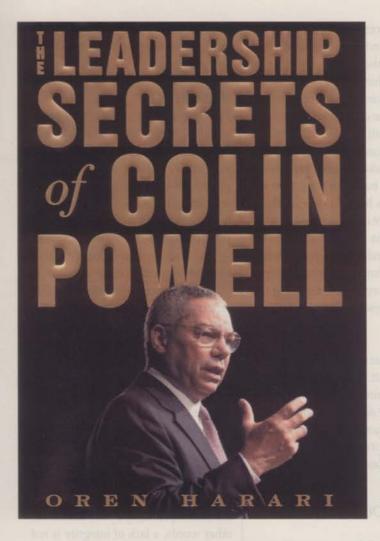
POWELL'S RULES FOR RECRUITING AND PROMOTING

But who are these "best people," and how do we find them? Powell advises leaders to hire, place, and promote talented individuals with the following qualities:

Look for intelligence and judgment and, most critically, a capacity to anticipate, to see around corners. Also look for loyalty, integrity, a high energy drive, a balanced ego and the drive to get things done.

That sounds a bit like motherhood and apple pie, right? But when you

Leadership.



Author Oren Harari, Ph.D., is a professsor of managment at the McLaren Graduate School of Business, University of San Francisco.

dig down into the way organizations actually assess the talents of potential recruits, you find that in many cases, very different screens are put into place. What actually happens, more often than not, is that the human resources staff focuses on attributes like length of resume, number of degrees and previous job titles.

And, of course, that's not surprising. These are very tangible qualifications. They can be confirmed through reference checks. They make possible (or at least seem to make possible) apples-to-apples comparisons. When one connects the dots on a resume, one can discern a pattern of career growth, or lack of growth. All of this is useful information.

Yet Powell's favorite attributes have none of these advantages. They are intangible and nonlinear. They are hard to infer from a resume. (Based on these two pages of bullet points, am I confident that this individual can "see around corners?") But it is precisely those attributes that define the "best" people.

The fact that tracking these attributes is tough only makes that task all the more important. Resume scanning simply isn't enough. Yes, a broad portfolio of skills and experience can be extremely valuable, but it can also yoke an individual to the past or make that person resistant to change. Skills are hard to acquire, but they become obsolete very easily.

Except for jobs that involve truly rare skills or experience bases, therefore, it may be more important to hire a highly talented person with the willLook for intelligence and judgment and, most critically, a capacity to anticipate, to see around corners. Also look for loyalty, integrity, a high energy drive, a balanced ego and the drive to get things done.

ingness and ability to learn than someone with a proven skill set.

In other words, you can readily train a bright and willing novice in the fundamentals of your business. It's almost impossible to train someone to have integrity, judgment, intelligence, energy, balance and the drive to get things done.

So good leaders stack the deck in their favor by emphasizing these attributes in the recruitment and promotion phase.

Remember, Powell would never reject individuals who possess critical skills and experience.

Only a Stealth bomber pilot can fly a Stealth bomber. Powell would insist, though, that in today's chaotic environment, other talents are likely to prove even more important over the long haul, especially when the leader is attempting to develop a high-performance team, or when he is attempting to select and groom future leaders.

INTELLIGENCE AND JUDGMENT

When he refers to intelligence, Powell is not referring to I.Q. levels, although I'm sure he'd be happy to have a representation of high-I.Q. individuals on his staff. But the intelligence that adds value to an enterprise may have little or nothing to do with an intelligence test score. Notice that Powell puts "intelligence and judgment" together in one phrase. By doing so, his is emphasizing that in picking people, leaders need to look for the individual who has not only the intellectual firepower, but also the experience and common sense needed to bring his or her intelligence to bear on the organizational mission.

A CAPACITY TO SEE AROUND CORNERS

The most successful enterprises are lead by individuals who look beyond today, those who are capable of seeing beyond the horizon. These are leaders who grasp emerging shifts in technol-

ogy, competitors, capital markets, demographics, and consumer needs, and then act on their understanding to launch something new.

But the person at the top can't implement the vision on his own. Therefore, he has to recruit people at all levels of the organization who can look around corners and make sound entrepreneurial judgments based on what they see there. Leaders have to sign up those people who are eager to help interpret the storm signs and opportunities on the horizon, and who are just as interested in monitoring the external environment as they are in managing the internal processes of the organization.

LOYALTY

Powell has clear notions about this key leadership trait. To those who report to him, he explains loyalty in clear terms:

When we are debating an issue, loyalty means giving me your honest opinion, whether you think I'll like it our not. Disagreement, at this state, stimulates me. But once a decision

The best people will develop the best ideas and the most effective follow-ups. They will develop the right technology and the optimal application for it. They will figure out how to use available resources to connect with one another to develop the most exciting products, the most extraordinary cost reductions, the most dazzling customer services, the most lucrative niches, and the most promising investment opportunities.

is made, the debate ends. From that point on, loyalty means executing the decision as if it were your own.

INTEGRITY

Few things matter more to Powell than personal integrity. The message is never to undervalue integrity when you are recruiting and promoting people for your organization. People with integrity clearly "stand for" something bigger than themselves — a purpose, or a core set of values and ideals — and their actions honestly reflect their convictions. There is a coherence in their decisions and behaviors that reflects their ideals. They are persistent and consistent in how they express their values. They are tenacious in pursuing their purpose.

Let's look at this from the other end of the telescope. A person with a milelong resume but only a weak sense of integrity is likely to make expedient decisions. He or she is likely to be focused keenly on organizational politics, or to be driven by what he or she thinks the boss wants to hear, or to be motivated primarily by self interest. In other words, a lack of integrity is not simply an ethical concern; it also poses a clear threat to the effective functioning of the organization.

DRIVE

"I want to try to make things move faster, cut through things more quickly," Powell said in an address to State Department employees. That's drive, and by all accounts, Powell wants to see a lot of it. Powell advises leaders in any organization to pick people who not only have good things in their head and heart, but also have what he calls a "high energy drive" and "the drive to get things done." Don't pick people who passively wait for their marching orders. Don't retain people who whine about pressure, the fast pace of the place, or how hard it is to catch one's breath around this place.



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Instead, hire people who live urgency — people who feel that there is not one moment to lose. Promote people who themselves set objectives and priorities beyond their formally assigned goals.

In short, pick people who are impatient with status quo management and are always turning over stones looking for ways to improve things. Driven leaders who surrond themselves with driven colleagues are much more likely to achieve extraordinary results.

BALANCED EGO

Powell doesn't feel that leaders should suppress their strong egos. Likewise, he suggests that leaders pick people who don't apologize for being competent, and don't apologize for seeking high goals. Pick people who are self-assured and who acknowledge their accomplishments when others recognize them.

At the same time, Powell seeks people who aren't overly impressed by their own importance, and who don't take much stock of their press clippings. "To maintain your perspective," advises Powell, "work hard on humility." That's balance. That's the kind of person you want to recruit and promote.

Ego balance implies self-awareness. People who are balanced know when they can blast ahead, and also know when they have to pause, regroup, and enlist new allies with complementary skills. Says Powell, "A good leader surroundshimself with people who complement his skills. Only an honest and fair assesment of your abilities will allow this to happen."

Insecure leaders can't stomach the idea of working with people who are more skilled than they are. Leaders with the balanced ego that Powell advocates absolutely relish the opportunity to lead the best.

SUMMARY

The criteria for hiring, promoting and placing people — as well as for groom-

PRINCIPLES

- 1. Hire primarily on talent and values, not just on resumes. Resumes, by definition, describe past performance. In today's environment, they are no longer the best predictors of future performance.
- 2. When seeking talent, look for the key Powell traits in hiring and promoting:
- · Intelligence and judgment
- · A capacity to anticipate, to see around corners
- Loyalty
- Integrity
- · Drive
- · Balanced ego
- **3.** Seek value alignment. Don't hire or promote anyone who does not share the same values that drive your organization. Even a talented individual will find it hard to contribute to your mission if his or her values are not in sync with your own.
- **4.** Hire individuals who are better than you and individuals who can compensate for your weaknesses. Don't let your ego get in the way. Hire people whom you consider good enough to succeed you, should the situation warrant it. (It's the only way you'll ever be free to move up the ladder, by the way). Strong leaders are not afraid to surround themselves with people who are better than them.
- **5.** As a leader, apply these same attributes to yourself. Hold yourself to the same standards, and role-model them every day.

ing future leaders — ought to fit the realities of the new world that all leaders face. That is, a world marked by complexity, speed, ambiguity and constant flux.

Accordingly, Powell advises today's leaders to emphasize intangible attributes like intelligence and judgment, anticipation, loyalty, integrity, drive and balanced ego when going out in search of talent.

The alternative is grim: If you pick people who are weak in these attributes — even if their tangibles on the resume look good — you'll find it very hard to mobilize a team of individuals who take initiative, seek additional learning, show loyalty to each other, share knowledge with each other, and put the team's mission above their own personal needs.

Powell's rules for picking people apply to every level and function of the organization. In fact, the punch line of this entire chapter — one which you've no doubt already figured out — is that these intangible attributes are the very ones that leaders themselves should posses and demonstrate every day. Leaders who follow Powell's rules for themselves and in picking others will make their own lives a lot easier, and they'll be far more likely to achieve success.

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Leadership HONOR ROLL

Since 1999, the Lawn & Landscape Leadership Awards, sponsored by Chipco Professional Products, have been presented annually to green industry professionals who uphold the highest standards of industry ethics and personal integrity.

This prestigious award celebrates the dedication and contribution these individuals make to the betterment of our industry. Their leadership provides us with a beacon by which to pattern our work.

The 2002 Leadership Award recipients join an illustrious group of professionals and will forever be remembered in the green industry's history.

4onor Roll

The Class of 2001

Dale Amstutz

Northern Lawns Corp. Omaha, Neb.

Tom Bland

Bland Landscaping Co., Inc. Cary, N.C.

Bill Hoopes

Scotts LawnService Marysville, Ohio

Bruce Hunt

The Brickman Group Long Grove, III.

Adam Jones

Massey Services Inc. Maitland, Fla.

Kurt Kluznik

Yardmaster Inc.
Painesville, Ohio

Sam Lang

Fairway Green Lawn Care Raleigh, N.C.

Gary LaScalea

GroGreen Lawn, Tree & Shrub Care Plano, Texas

Beth Seme

Elizabeth A. Seme Inc. Latham, N.Y.

Joseph Vargas, Ph.D.

Michigan State University East Lansing, Mich.



Leadership Honor Roll

The Class of 2000

Bob Andrews

The Greenskeeper

Carmel, Ind.

Gary Clayton

All Green

Marietta, Ga.

Russell Frith

Lawn Doctor

Holmdel, N.J.

Ron Kujawa

Kujawa Enterprises

Cudhay, Wis.

Tom Lied

Lied's Landscape

Design & Development

Sussex, Wis.

George Morrell

The Morrell Group

Atlanta, Ga.

Linda Novy

Gardeners' Guild

San Rafael, Calif.

J. Landon Reeve

Chapel Valley Landscape

Woodbine, Md.

Wayne Richards

Cagwin & Dorward

Novato, Calif.

The Class of 1999

Laurie Broccolo

Broccolo Tree & Lawn Care

Rochester, N.Y.

Dave

Environmental Care

Calabasas, Calif.

Davey Tree Institute

Kent, Ohio

Michael Kernaghan

The Weed Man

Mississauga, Ontario

Jim Doppel

Atwood Lawn Care

Sterling Heights, Mich.

Mark Schlossberg

Pro-Lawn

Baltimore, Md.

Phil Fogarty

Crowley's Vegetation Mgmt.

Cleveland, Ohio

Chris Senske

Senske Tree & Lawn Care

Kennewick, Wash.

Norman Goldenberg

TruGreen-ChemLawn

Memphis, Tenn.

Tom Tolkacz

Single Tree &

Landscape Care

Denver, Colo.

2002 Leadership Awards

CLASS OF 2002



John Buechner Lawn Doctor Holmdel, N.J.



Terry Kwrth Weed Man Middleton, Wis.



Jom
Delaney
Professional
Lawn Care
Association
of America
Marietta, Ga.



Joe Reynolds Black Diamond Lawn Care Toledo, Ohio



Sam
Parison
Farison Lawn
Care Inc.
Louisville,
Ky.



Barry
Troutman
ValleyCrest
Cos.
Calabasas,
Calif.

Chipco Professional Products and Lawn & Landscape magazine are proud to announce the winners of the fourth annual Leadership Awards, These individuals embody the essence of leaderinvolvement, pioneering spirit, dedication to education, commitment to personal improvement or environmental stewardship.

Congratulations and thanks for your, outstanding contributions to the lawn and landscape industry.



PROFESSIONAL LAWN & TREE CARE

PLUS PAINTING AND Gutter Cleaning AND WINDOW WASHING & CHIMNEY SWEEPING AND PETGROOMING and BABY-SITTING!





Grass roots to
Grassroots, John
Buechner is the
advice man.

By Mandy Jenkins



John Buechner is nothing if not committed. To his family, his career and the industry at large, he is always there.

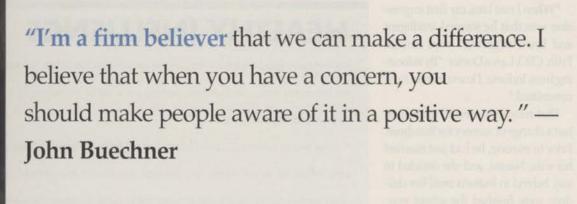
As the technical support director for Lawn Doctor, Buechner is there to help the contractors in the field as much as he can. Outside of work, through his involvement with national and state associations, he offers up this effort to support the industry itself.

Yet, ith all of this giving, Buechner still manages to have time to rhumba.

A DAY IN THE LIFE. A peek into John Buechner's Palm Pilot would show a day full of phone calls, meetings and special projects. A self-professed "morning person," Buechner rolls into work at Lawn Doctor's Holmdel, N.J., office at 7 a.m.

In a typical day, Buechner says, he answers anywhere from 10 to 30 technical support calls from Lawn Doctor franchisees, acting as a consultant to their various "frequently asked questions."

"Helping people is my favorite part of the job," he states. "I like it when people call back in and tell me how everything turned out. It confirms that I gave them good advice.



There's a sense of satisfaction in being able to help solve peoples' problems and answer their questions."

In the technical services department, Buechner works with the company's various departments, giving ideas and checking technical information. From assisting with the development of new programs with a lawn care material company to making marketing materials from a technical standpoint, Buechner has his hand in developing Lawn Doctor's service.

Even now as he spends more days in meetings than on turf, he still manages to keep up with the industry by constant contact. In addition to spending his day-times on the phone, he periodically travels between the company's franchises when needed, which gives him his much-needed field experience. In addition, Buechner credits new forms of communication with

making his job easier.

"The electronic media has changed my job somewhat because what I do is based on being able to get information quickly," Buechner explains. "The Internet keeps me up to date because I can go to different extension sites.

"I think the company has more people in the field that do some of the work I used to do," he comments. "I rely more on my technical support staff and on our field staff to tell me what's going on."

Until he leaves each day at 4:30 p.m., Buechner is inundated with the need for service — and he gives willingly. From business troubleshooting with franchise owners to offering tech support to his company's committees, he is a man of constant advice made possible only from years of experience.

GREEN DREAMS. In high school in Ft. Wayne, Ind., Buechner knew he wanted to be involved in the green

industry in some capacity. "I really didn't know what I wanted to do, but I did know I wanted to go to college and I wanted to do something involving urban agriculture and turf," he explains. "I was interested in the green industry, but I really didn't know which part."

Buechner started out as a forestry major at Purdue University in 1971, but he thought it was a "dead-end" field and decided to major in turf management.

"I planned to be a golf course superintendent when I graduated from college," Buechner admits. "I had worked at golf courses through my college years and my first job out of college was at a golf course."

Following his first job, Buechner became involved with the distribution side of the business, but found himself wanting something different.

"I think I just wanted to be more of a consultant and work in the lawn care industry," he recalls. "A professor of mine at Purdue did consulting with lawn care startups in the early 1970s and it really piqued my interest. I was interested in it because of the ability to tie my technical background with my interest in business."

In 1982, while scanning industry want ads in a trade publication, Buechner found his opportunity with a growing company named Lawn Doctor. In 1984, he was hired and his move from Indiana to Tom's River, N.J., where he now resides, was the first sign of his commitment to the company.

John Buechner Profile

Name: John Buechner

Company: Lawn Doctor

Location: Holmdel, N.J.

Career Highlights:

- Technical support director, Lawn Doctor
- President, New Jersey Turfgrass Association (NJTA)
- . State affairs chairman, NJTA
- · President, Professional Lawn Care Association of America
- President, New Jersey Alliance for Environmental Concerns (NJAEC).
- · Member, board of directors, NJAEC.

"When I met him, my first impression was that he seemed intelligent and knowledgeable," says Russell Frith, CEO, Lawn Doctor. "By relocating from Indiana, I knew he had to be committed."

That relocation created more than just a change of scenery for Buechner. Prior to moving, he had just married his wife, Naomi, and she decided to stay behind in Indiana until her children were finished the school year. Traveling alone to his new job, Buechner found a whole new way of life in New Jersey.

"It was a culture shock for me," Buechner says with a laugh. "Everything moves at a faster rate of speed on the East Coast. There are more people fit into less space."

Buechner soon adjusted to his surroundings and has now been a part of

the Lawn Doctor company for 18 years. From the time he started in 1984, the company has grown from \$20 million in revenue to an estimated \$70 million for the year 2002. As the company has grown to more than 400 franchises in 48 states, Buechner has had a hand in more of the business.

"I really serve as a support function to the Lawn Doctor staff," he states modestly. "I didn't create anything on my own, it has always been a team effort."

PLANT POLITICS. Buechner can't afford to be out of touch with the green industry due to his involvements that extend far beyond his work with Lawn Doctor. His extensive work in industry associations and, most particularly, green industry politics, relies heavily on his knowledge and experience.

Buechner has served as president of the New Jersey Turfgrass Association (NJTA), the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) and the New Jersey Alliance for Environmental Concerns He now acts as NJTA's state affairs chairman and serves on the Alliance's board of directors. In addition to sporting an impressive list of association positions, he is on a first-name basis with a number of politicians.

"I am so thankful for the opportunity to be active in my industry associations," Buechner remarks. "I don't think any earth shattering things happened in my tenure there, but I think I gained personal growth from working in a different environment with a number of different people. Working with them towards a common goal was very fulfilling for me."

Buechner's career with Lawn Doctor has involved a great deal of work in franchise sales. He helps potential franchisees

HEALTHY INFLUENCE

Behind every good leader are not only the people who follow him, but also those who led him on his way. John Buechner pointed out a few of the people who inspired him to learn and achieve.

"The two co-owners of Lawn Doctor, Russell Frith, Sr. and Bob Magda, have been very influential in my career and industry association involvement by giving me opportunities to participate and allowing me to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes."

"From my wife, Naomi, I've learned to be a better listener. I've learned to not react before I listen. I've realized I'm not always going to agree with everyone. I should try and see their perspective, instead of trying to force change on them. I had to realize there's more than one opinion and one idea."

with the licensing laws and requirements they may come across with their state governments. This work is what started Buechner off into his work with green industry politics.

"The regulatory side of my job made it so that when regulations would hit various states, I was thrown into the mix," Buechner explains. "Being involved, giving input and seeing changes based upon that input is what tipped me off to the fact of, 'Hey, you really can make a difference.""

Buechner is passionate about politics at the grassroots level, both in and out of the green industry. This belief is what he says really fuels his association work.

"I'm a firm believer that we can make a difference," he declares. "I believe that when you have a concern, you should make people aware of it in a positive way. If you have an issue you don't feel is right, let your politicians know by saying, 'Here's why I think it's wrong and here's my suggestion on how to fix it.""

On a few occasions, Buechner must take care to work outside of Lawn Doctor on certain regulatory fixes, efforts best expressed through collaboration with associations.

"I believe that working through an association takes the impact off of being scrutinized as 'this is what one company wants,'" Buechner says. "Then, the issue becomes 'this is what the industry wants.' Sometimes what I'm looking at is just company issues, but I have to always look first at what is good for the industry."

Even though he knows Buechner works for the industry, Frith feels his employee acts as a great company representative by affecting change in associations. "Our company has always "Helping people is the favorite part of my job. I like it when people call back in and tell me how everything turned out. It confirms that I gave them good advice. There's a sense of satisfaction in being able to help solve peoples' problems and answer their questions." — John Buechner

attempted to be good stewards and tried to give back to the industry we're benefiting from," Frith comments. "John is continuing to be active and continuing to make a contribution in both Lawn Doctor and in the industry groups he works with."

That contribution, Buechner said, is best felt through the changes made via his industry involvement. Rules and regulations, particularly in New Jersey, have felt the impact of Buechner and the associations he is involved with.

"Over the years, we've seen issues and regulations become reasonable, fair and workable because of industry input and maybe some of my personal input," he explains. "We've seen changes that are positive for the industry, and that makes me feel good."

All in all, in his nearly 30 years with the green industry, Buechner has been pleased by more than just regulatory changes.

"I think the industry has grown up and become more

professional over the years," he comments. "It's a real business now, run by real businessmen with real profit. It's not just a guy with a pickup truck and a spreader who calls himself a lawn care guy. I think we have respect now as a legitimate industry."

TAKING TIME OUT. Even with all of his work and association activities, Buechner still has time to go home. He and Naomi have five children between them, and he has a golf game to attend to. He credits his ability to balance work and family on time management and prioritization.

"You have to make time for the things that are important to you," Buechner says. "I've had to learn my limitations over time. I've learned to say no." Using this philosophy, Buechner said he knows when to "say when." When a new opportunity to become involved in an association or a new task arises, he knows not to stretch himself too thin. If he chooses to try something new, he forces himself to back down from something else.

In the last year, he and Naomi have found a new way to use their time together: By learning how to ballroom dance. They have found it not only brings them closer together, but it is a fun activity to learn.

"One of the reasons I did it was to spend more time with my wife," Buechner remarks. "It's set aside as our time together."

Buechner added his favorite dances are the rhumba and the foxtrot, "It's a real sense of accomplishment for me."

In addition to dance nights, he also tried to take Saturdays for golf. In fact, Buechner said if he ever won the lottery, he'd play golf every day.

Realistically, he knows his work with Lawn Doctor will continue and he will remain involved as much as possible in

the industry.

"In the next five years, I'll still be at Lawn Doctor, enjoying the success and growth of the company in addition to enjoying my own personal growth and success," Buechner predicts. "I'm very comfortable in what I do and I enjoy it."

As much as he loves his career and industry, Buechner knows he will someday retire. After that, gardening and golf will become much bigger parts of his life. "I know someday I'll finally say, T've had enough," Buechner admits. "But I know even if I wasn't working with Lawn Doctor right now, I'd still be involved in some aspect of the green industry. This is what I know."

The author is a contributing writer to Lawn & Landscape magazine.

John Buechner on LEADERSHIP & BUSINESS

"A good leader has the ability to listen, to be tolerant of different opinions and will try to gain the consensus of the group.

A smart businessman will listen to his employees in making a decision, but will also be realistic and understanding that in a business environment, ultimately, he will be responsible for the decisions he'll be making."

Tom Delaney
balances his
industry
successes as
PLCAA
executive
director
with his true
triumph – his
family at home.

By Kristin Mohn Tom Delaney's interest in all things "green and growing" always seemed to stem from an inherent source. Even as a boy growing up near the concrete and metal microcosm of New York City, Delaney preferred the delights of his garden, watching vegetables grow and tending to plants. While classmates tuned into comedic sitcoms on television, Delaney was engrossed with "The Modern Farmer," a program exploring the world of agriculture. From the very beginning, Delaney's affinity for plants seemed natural, almost familiar.

Therefore, it came as no big surprise to Delaney when he learned his grandfather had grown up on a farm in Ireland, explaining his inborn pull toward agricultural pursuits. In addition, he was surprised to find out his grandfather had served as a volunteer firefighter in Atlanta, Ga., near where Delaney currently makes his home. "His fire station was only a block or two from where I worked in the city," he notes.

And, as soon as Delaney accumulated enough frequent flyer miles, he flew his family to Ireland to stand on that very farm where his grandfather lived, instantly connecting several generations with the source of Delaney's love of the outdoors. "That was one of the most memorable and exciting things for me—to see that farm where my grandfather grew up," he says.

Today, as executive vice president of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA), Delaney approaches his association duties simultaneously with the meticulous hand of a farmer and indomitable strength of a firefighter — qualities proudly embraced by his grandfather years ago. "It's a short circle from grandfather to grandson," Delaney reflects.

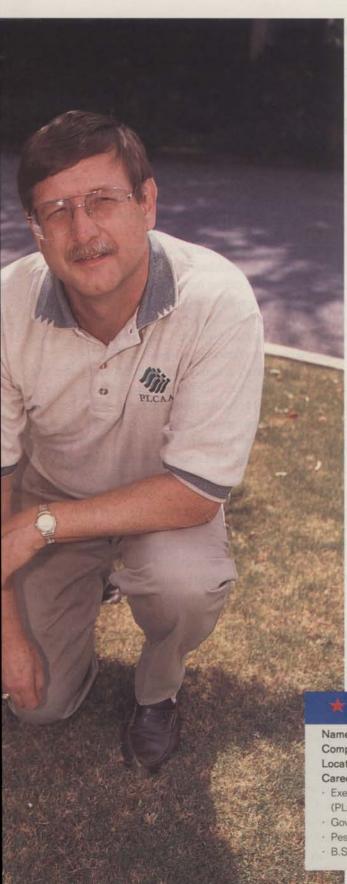
BIG APPLE BEGINNINGS. After shedding his original childhood wish to be a forest ranger, Delaney decided to pursue agronomy, first at the State University of New York at Farmingdale. As an undergraduate student, Delaney had his first up close and personal look at agriculture with eight weeks of intensive barn duty, he remembers. "Here I was, a city boy, and I had to milk cows at 4:30 in the morning and the afternoon," he says. "I received one credit hour for eight weeks of work — milking cows, dealing with the calves and chickens, etc. But it was sort of interesting being exposed to all that kind of stuff."

After leaving Farmingdale, Delaney enrolled at the University of Georgia. Delaney chose agricultural economics as his major and soon joined Alpha Gamma Rho, the agricultural fraternity on campus. It was in Georgia that

Delaney met his wife and decided to put down roots, again echoing his grandfather's experiences in that region.

Upon graduation Delaney accepted a position with the Georgia Department of Agriculture as a pesticide regulator, where worked for the next 15 years. "I was with the entomology and pes-

regulator, where worked for the next 15 years. "I was with the entomology and pes-



ticide division, where I dealt with the licensing of pesticide applicators and certification," he explains. "I was also on some EPA committees, state committees and involved with several associations."

After 15 years with the state department, Delaney reached the end of his pay grade and started considering other options, even though he wanted to stay in the local area. Therefore, when a government affairs position opened up with PLCAA in 1990, located in Marietta, Ga., Delaney viewed it as a perfect lifestyle and career fit.

Soon after Delaney joined the association, lawn care hearings began in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives regarding pesticide regulation. As the association government affairs representative, Delaney was asked to testify, leaving him extremely nervous, he relates. "There were a good number of people sitting in the audience when I testified, and I think that's the sickest I've ever been to my stomach," he laughs. "But it wasn't too bad."

During Delaney's days testifying before Congress, one particular experience allowed him to find his voice — and taught him the value of using it. During a radio talk show, Delaney was part of a three-person panel discussing lawn care issues and legislation. Although Delaney had valid opinions and attempted to have them heard, other panel members monopolized the conversation. "I learned that those that spoke the loudest and the most got heard," he states.

Following the interview, the hostess apologized for the unfair balance of opinions on the show, but the apology came too late. "A lot of good that apology did me — I didn't get to express my point," he stresses. "So, I decided that I was going to get my words in from now on."

However, Delaney avoids turning meetings into shouting matches, making his point through a careful mix of subtlety, tact and patience. This approach has proved to be extremely beneficial when dealing with legislators, lawn care professionals and the media, says PLCAA president Bill Hoopes. "He's

Tom Delaney Profile

Name: Tom Delaney

Company: Professional Lawn Care Association of America

Location: Marietta, Ga. Career Highlights:

- · Executive vice president, Professional Lawn Care Association of America
- · Government affairs representative, PLCAA
- · Pesticide regulator, Georgia Department of Agriculture
- · B.S. in agricultural economics, University of Georgia

"In my view, his greatest value to the industry is his unwavering interest and involvement in trying to make a positive impact on legislation and regulations that dictate the rules we work by. He's very much an unsung hero in that regard." — Bill Hoopes

very soft-spoken, but also doesn't rattle easily," he says. "Because he is soft-spoken, and because he doesn't get very excited, he's able to work well with regulators. Some people look at PLCAA and lawn service representatives and expect us to be combative, but he isn't, which works for him and makes him very effective."

DEALING WITH EMOTIONS. While Delaney's industry experiences have taught him to find his voice and express his opinion, he's also learned the need to listen carefully and recognize the emotional politics involved with pesticide issues. For example, Delaney described lawn care hearings that would call upon children to testify to demonstrate the potentially harmful effects of pesticides. "It is interesting to see the games people play with others' emotions," he says. "To this day you still see the argument of the damaged/injured child – it's still there with the issue of IPM in schools, for example.

"But it's tough to win over the opinion of a mother when it comes to her child," he continues. "As a result, the industry has learned some public relations and quite a few tips about being compassionate and showing empathy." Additionally, Delaney has learned to pick his battles, and has accepted that he can't win all situations. "Logic doesn't necessarily appeal to an audience of activist groups," he maintains. "It's about having to decide how far to go to defend the product that we use."

A FAMILY AFFAIR. Of course, Delaney's sensitivity toward families dealing with emotional pesticide issues must be partly attributed to his clear respect and adoration for his own clan at home. As the executive vice president for a national association, Delaney finds himself on the road quite frequently, but takes the time each day to touch base with his wife, son and daughter. "I make a habit of calling home every night," he states. As someone whose face lights up when talking about his family, Delaney communicates a clear message in the office that although he's committed to his work, family comes first, related Karen Weber, communications director for PLCAA.

"Tom is definitely a family man — a devoted father and husband," she describes. "It is refreshing to work with someone who is committed to family. I think his family values help him balance the demands of work and are responsible for his warm, personable approach to all that he does." With Delaney's firm family base, he's able to lend a true focus to his association work, Weber emphasizes.

Delaney's 21-year-old son aspires to be a lawyer, while his 18-year-old daughter is currently pursuing equine studies, attending a special program in West Virginia this fall. "I think somehow, a little of my agricultural background rubbed off on my daughter," he remarks. Regardless of his children's activities, Delaney takes pride in being a part of them. "I've been through baseball with my son, softball with my daughter, soccer with

DAY ON THE HILL

Although Delaney has held the executive vice president position with PLCAA for several years, he has also retained the title of government affairs representative since that first year. Therefore, much of Delaney's day-to-day tasks revolve around the political side of the green industry. His interest in this area began with a close association with government representatives while he worked for the state department, he identifies. "I was across the street from the capital building while I worked there so I was sort of around it a lot for the 15 years I was there," he says.

In addition, since Delaney attended the University of Georgia with the three sons of the local commissioner, he automatically felt at ease in the commissioner's office. "His sons were my Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity brothers, so I felt comfortable there," he recalls.

Delaney's first year testifying also marked the first year of an important annual political event for PLCAA — the Legislative Day on the Hill in Washington, D.C. Each year PLCAA members travel to the nation's Capitol to discuss pressing legislative issues with their respective congressmen. Although the individual effect is important, the true value of the event lies in the overall visibility the event lends to the association and the industry, Delaney stresses "If you take 25 or so states that attend and multiply that by two — for two senators — and then multiply again by several representatives, you have so many possible visits to help make an impact," he relates.

2002 Leadership Award Winners

both of them — I'm very much involved in anything they're involved with," he says.

While his children were growing up, Delaney often brought them along on trips all over the U.S. As a result, his son and daughter were exposed to several different states, paralleling Delaney's own interest in travel. "My daughter would get involved with kids from other states, just as I always liked knowing I had friends in some 30 or 40 states," he says.

In fact, as Delaney has traveled and formed relationships throughout the country, many of those industry cohorts have become friends — including Hoopes. After initially meeting Delaney at a PLCAA

Day on the Hill event about a decade ago, Hoopes was immediately struck with Delaney's tireless ambition and resolve for the green industry. "In my view, his greatest value to the industry is his unwavering interest and involvement in trying to make a positive impact on legislation and regulations that dictate the rules we work by," he explains. "He's very much an unsung hero in that regard."

THE DAILY GRIND. When Delaney is not traveling, his daily activities vary each day, throwing the idea of a "typical day" out the window. "We could be getting ready for a show or a membership renewal or a board meeting or chapter meeting," he states. "We jump all over the place, based on the phone calls that come in."

Without a typical schedule, things in the office can get harried — and many times Delaney's cluttered office space reflects the randomness of his to-do list. Nevertheless, despite the shuffled papers and buried nameplate, Delaney keeps his organization in check, Weber relates. "He knows when you move something," she points out. "And when you ask for a document, presto — it's right at his fingertips, like magic. He has his own organizational system that deserves respect."

Organizing his thoughts and his tasks can range from sorting through the dozens of morning e-mail replies or following up with a media source for an interview. In fact, dealing with the media can be one of the most rewarding aspects of Delaney's career, as long as the truth wins out, he maintains. "I like to see an interview or something positive printed and communicated," he says. "It's great to see that done correctly in the interest of public relations."

On the other hand, a misplaced phrase or incorrect statement can turn out to be one of the worst parts of Delaney's daily grind. "I think that it's pretty poor when writers in the press make the story instead of reporting the story," he notes. Particularly when unsubstantiated pesticide studies lend bad press to the green industry, Delaney sees the dangers of bad press. "Even if you get a little bit of press coming back explaining that the study was wrong, the study still gets picked up by city council and



Despite growing up in New York City, Tom Delaney developed an early fascination with all things "green and growing."

legislators, newspapers or used as a footnote somewhere," he notes.

Delaney's emphasis on the truth is recognized by others, specifically Weber, who described his personality as being honest, open and trustworthy. "With Tom, what you see is what you

get," she states. "He's a genuine person who says what he thinks and cares enough to do the right thing. There's no hidden agenda with Tom."

Asking Delaney about his plans for the next few years elicits a brief pause and a furrowed brow, as he hesitates to offer any concrete assumptions. "After 9/11 and the rise of technology, it's hard to judge too far down the road what may go on," he admits. However, with the rising uncertainty, Delaney has seen one positive trend with association members and colleagues — a strengthening commitment to family. "All of us are reprioritizing what we do more often and aren't waiting as long," he says. "I see that from our board members and our association members, with more attention to family and personal life."

For example, colleagues are increasingly sensitive to the day a meeting is scheduled, in case it interferes with a child's baseball game or dance recital. In addition, people are less willing to relocate if it means taking time away from their families, he adds. "You can't move people everywhere anymore just because you want to," he says. "It's important where you're located, and less people want to travel day in and day out." Of course, for Delaney, commitment to family is nothing new, and as long as he can spend holidays and anniversaries at home, in addition to making those daily phone calls, he can guarantee at least one aspect of his future.

In the meantime, Delaney plans to continue his association work and undying support for the lawn care and pesticide industry. "He's really a believer in the benefit of the green industry—I'm a friend to him and will continue to be down the road," Hoopes relates. And, as Delaney's successes continue, friends and colleagues alike can be sure that Delaney's amiable, focused character will stay the same — qualities undoubtedly passed down from his like-minded grandfather.

"While he's gone from government affairs director to executive vice president, he's still accessible, down-to-earth and caring," Weber describes. "PLCAA serves as a voice for the industry, and Tom is that voice."

The author is a contributing writer to Lawn & Landscape magazine.



FARSON

For Sam Farison, the world is shaped like a diamond — a field painted with perfect stripes of emerald grass and worn in with a footprint-beaten path connecting dust-covered bases. Outfield players watch for home-runs and cheers from the stands create a comfortable white noise. Farrison waits in the dugout with his team. In his world, the game revolves around people.

"There's no question it's the people," he says, noting what he considers the core of his company, Farison Lawn Care, located in Louisville, Ky. When he talks business, he talks family and when he discusses the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA), of which



A focus on
people drives
Sam Farison
and Farison
Lawn Care.
By Kristen
Hampshire

he was past president, he names his friends. When he reflects on his professional accomplishments, he always steers credit toward relationships.

Clearly, Farison's "players" are the center of his 30-year green industry career — but his soft spot, still, is the game. "My Achilles' heel is baseball," he admits, digressing into an abbreviated account of the American League ballparks and his favorite team, the Boston Red Sox. Now, Farison is spending time on fields in his own area with his sports turf installation and maintenance division. He has found a way to mesh his love and his livelihood.

"I like the sports turf side of the business – it's fun," he says, though he does not attribute athletic dexterity to his interest in the add-on service. Sam is modest – "conservative" he says – and he swiftly switches the topic back to people. In Farison's world, family is first base.

FIRST BASE, FAMILY. "Oddly enough, I've only had two jobs in my life," he remarks. "One was pumping

gas at a gas station when I was 16 years old and the other has been working for myself in Farison Lawn Care."

Farison started simple — he and his brother, Dan, mowed several lawns when they were in high school in 1972, at the brink of the chemical lawn care age when TruGreen was making its mark, Farison remembers. "We kind of ponied off of what they were doing a little bit and started a lawn care company, which stayed very, very small until we got out of school."

But opportunity in the fertilization business was booming at the time, and the brothers took some advice from their father, Larry, and began offering their customers lawn care applications. "At the time, my father was living in Louisville working for a fertilizer company, so his idea was for us to go put a little fertilizer on lawns to make them grow, so that's what we did," Farison explains.

"We had a little bit of a business going and we enjoyed the work," adds Dan Farison. "Sam went to school, I went to school, then it grew from there."

After finishing a degree in agricultural plant science and biology from Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Ky., Farison returned to Louisville and Farison Lawn Care, where he and his brother had kept up the business on the side, and the twosome focused on growing their lawn care company—a gradual process. "At that time, we didn't have the expertise or the financial backing to do a whole lot, so we kept it small and we grew slowly over 10 years," Farison notes, adding that he expects the business will break \$1.5 million this year. "We're not that big, really."

Farison's humble nature creeps out when he discusses his company's progression from a mow-and-go high school operation to a renowned lawn care, maintenance and sports turf company. "We don't have grandiose plans – it makes a good living for us and we enjoy what we do," he says simply. "I'm very conservative by nature – I guess I grew up a conservative person. And my brother is fairly conservative, too."

Sam Farison Profile

Name: Sam Farison

Company: Farison Lawn Care

Location: Louisville, Ky.

Career Highlights:

- Kentucky Turfgrass Council Board of Directors 1992 to 1995, serving as president 1993 to 1995
- Professional Lawn Care Association Board of Directors 1995 to 2000
- Green Industry Expo Board of Directors 1995 to 2000, serving as president in 1999
- . Founded Farison Sports Turf in 1997, a division of Farison Lawn Care
- Winfrey P. Bunton II Kentucky Turfgrass Man of the Year 1997

"I'm proud that my two daughters are starting to come into the business and be a part of it. It hasn't gone full-circle yet, but we're closing the gap on it." – Sam Farison

Ask about profit and growth and business plans, and Farison revisits his cautious stance and says he's not in a hurry to grow, however, he and Dan have explored services like irrigation, lighting and sports turf to diversify the company. Sam figures success on more than dollars and cents – rather, he gauges the company's status on the quality he and his employees deliver. "Part of our growth on the lawn care side is we've always tried to do things right – do them the right way and stay with personalized service," Farison defines.

This standard doesn't surprise Farison's father, Larry, who at 80 years old makes a daily appearance at the office to crunch numbers, look into new equipment purchases or just "fiddle." "I don't do a heck of a lot," he says, although his sons would argue this – perhaps modesty runs in the family as well. Larry's influence is invaluable to Farison, and this respect is reciprocated. "Sam's a good thinker," Larry says of his son. "And he likes to think ahead. And if there's anything that bugs him, it's the little, bitty things. Like using a standard wrench on a metric set. If that isn't detail, I don't know what is."

But persnickety tendencies pay off in an industry where word of mouth makes or breaks your business. And advanced planning doesn'thurt bottom line budgeting, either. "He watches his purse strings very closely, for one thing, and he doesn't take chances," Larry relates. "He knows where he is going."

Both of the brothers have a pretty good idea where the business is headed – their individuality brings balance as Farison handles administrative duties and the sports turf division, and Dan oversees the lawn care portion. "We've got different personalities and different views on things, of course, but actually it's a plus and a benefit to the business," says Dan, who is less interested in what the Red Sox score is at bottom of the ninth inning.

"We complement each other very well," Sam agrees. "Some brothers can't share a pizza together – we get along fine."

"We both fit into our slots here nicely," Dan adds. On a separate occasion – a true testament to their synergy – he points out, "I know brothers that can't even share a pizza together."

STEALING SECOND. The tradeshow floor at the Louisville Exposition Center echoes with conversation, confusion and an occasional starting engine. Farison leans forward in his chair and rests his elbows on his knees — the noise is growing in the hall as clusters of people walk the International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment EXPO. "I'm with old PLCAA friends

here today," he says, describing a reunion of sorts.

Lou Weirich is part of the crew. The owner of Pro-X Systems Lawn Care, in Appleton, Wis., remembers first meeting Farison at a 1992 PLCAA strategic planning committee meeting in Cleveland – the two hit it off right away. "Sam has pretty much always been level-headed – a straight shooter," he describes of his friend's grounded nature. "He's been concerned with the industry. He really cares."

Farison's first steps into the political arena were close to home. In 1992 he joined the Kentucky Turfgrass Council (KTC), a research and educational foundation with predominant interests in golf course maintenance, grounds maintenance, athletic turf and lawn care. "I ran to just be on the board, and quickly, the next thing Iknew I was the president of KTC, and at that time there were some issues with ground water," he remembers.

Pressure from the state to institute ground water regulations sparked a "hot issue," and Farison worked with the water division to write a set of best management practices. "I was part of that process—I wasn't the main guy in it by any stretch of the imagination," he's quick to point out.

Then came posting and prenotification in the late 1980s, and Farison's involvement in KTC deepened. "I learned firsthand how regulations were made and how they are passed," he says. "I was actually kind of scared of how some regulations are passed. You want to be a part of how they are passed so you can avoid overreguation."

After an intense, but inspiring, introduction to legislative involvement, Farison leveled his legislative concerns by participating on a national level in PLCAA, eventually serving as director. "I just moved right up as a natural progression," he describes, noting that his state involvement built a solid foundation. He has attended every GIE show, served as its president in 1999 and after more than 10 years of industry politics under his belt, he is spending his first season "in recess."

Reflecting on association involvement, Sam's enthusiasm seeps through his every word. He is an industry advocate, and when he speaks of the professionals he met, the friendships he forged and the experience he earned by listening and learning from others, he speaks like a beaming father.

Sam recalls his first Day on the Hill — a true initiation to national politics. "Well, I was petrified," he says with a laugh. "It wasn't that I wasn't old enough, I just didn't know what to expect and I felt like I was out of my element. My element is with

sunglasses and a hat on and work clothes — not a business suit in Washington, D.C. That's not home to me."

Today, Farison hangs in his office a picture of him and Rep. William Natcher, known for the longest string of consecutive congressional votes — Louisville meets Legislation. Sam will never forget meeting his congressman.

Sam pauses and the ebbs and flows of tradeshow traffic pass. "The people you meet at the association level — you meet some very sharp people with different outlooks from different-sized businesses, and it gives you a different perspective on the whole picture," he says thoughtfully. Not only that, the travel opportunities PLCAA offered Farison opened his eyes to new places, quenching an adventurous flair that Weirich notices in his friend. "I'm proud of the fact that I served on the PLCAA board. I mean that sincerely," he shares.

ADD ON A THIRD. Farison never expected to "make it big," and he probably wouldn't tell you he did if you asked.

"I never had a pie-in-the-sky ambition," he admits. "My ambitions were to be successful—I just wanted to be successful and good and have a good, solid company."

His father just wanted his sons to have something to call their own. After working for a fertilizer corporation for most of his career, Larry sees the value in independent ownership and knew Sam and Dan's entrepreneurial spirits would carry them

far. "I was interested in him getting into business and not having to fight working for other people his whole life," Larry confides.

This attitude folds into much of what Farison Lawn Care stands for today, as an independent organization. "The independents like us — we may be a different breed," Farison challenges, noting how the industry has changed. Communities are springing up near large cities, home construction remains strong and lawn care companies are diversifying now more than ever, he describes. "There are a lot of services companies add and a lot of it is where they are located, they see an opportunity."

Farison is proud that his business remains staunchly independent, especially in today's market of consolidations and acquisitions.

Farison plans to expand the sports turf division, which currently generates 20 percent of Farison Lawn Care's revenue. "The sports turf side is intriguing to me, and I think there's a lot we can do there — we're pretty young in that," he says, mentioning a few fields the company has on its resume — University of Louisville, Georgetown University (Kentucky), and the Cincinnati Bengals practice facility in Georgetown, Ky., to name a few.

These projects are rewarding for Farison, who says he usually attends the first game at the facility and snaps a picture for his scrapbook. The field, undeniably, is Farison's canvas. "You stand back and look at the field and you know that not only did you put that field in, but you put it in from the ground up," he describes.

HOME RUN. Farison's game plan focuses on family — even more so, today, as his two daughters take an interest in Farison Lawn Care. He is grooming his oldest daughter, 23, to be the business manager and his youngest daughter, 17, works in the office during the summer. "I'm proud that my two daughters are starting to come into the business and be a part of it," he shares. "It hasn't gone full-circle yet, but we're closing the gap on it."

Farison keeps his friends and family close and the company's slow growth allows him to find a spot for each of his most valuable players. "We started out as a family business, and we kept it small and under control and it's good to see everyone get involved," he relates.

Now, Farison strikes a balance between work and family —

the two points of his life that converge at Farison Lawn Care each day. Though he maintains a strong presence in the lawn care portion of the business, his involvement is focused on overall management. A close and talented network of team members allow him to call a few more time outs for himself these days.

Farison considers his career so far and the potential for those just entering the industry now. "I think anyone who is young out there should realize that there is a lot of opportunity if you just look for it and do it — so much more than I've even accomplished," he says modestly. Farison offers his own fatherly advice — some inspirational pre-game words true to his sensible coaching style. "When things are controversial or if there is an issue, if you just approach it responsibly, you will always come out on top."

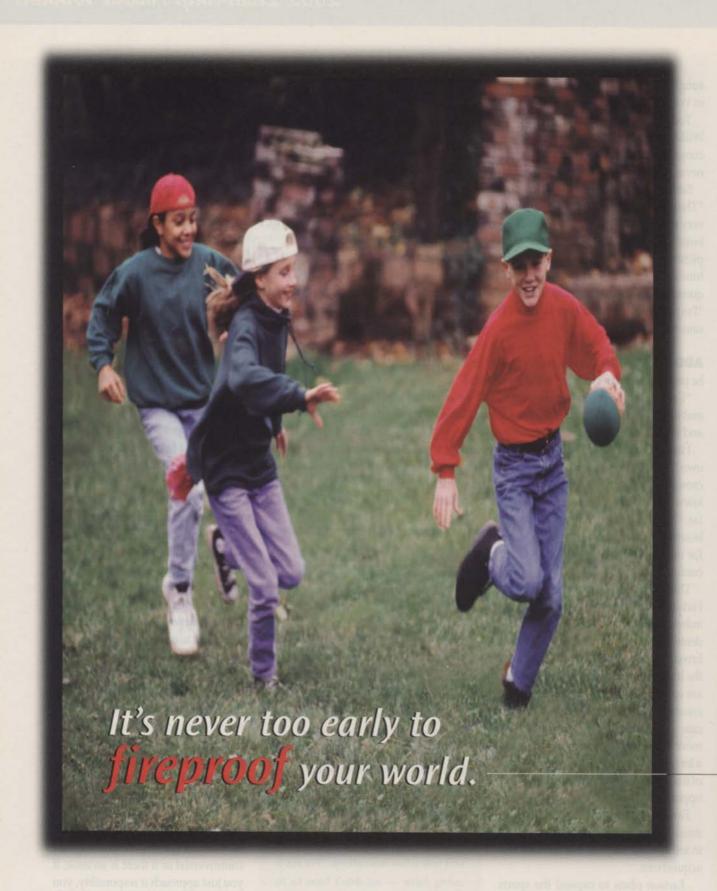
The author is managing editor, special projects, Lawn & Landscape magazine.

SWEET.

Farison Lawn Care redefines "home office" with its non-traditional setup. A Kentucky farmhouse built in the 1920s was once the Farison residence, but today it serves as the business headquarters.

"It's an older wood-frame house," describes Sam Farison, president of the Louisville, Ky.-based lawn care company. In the 1980s, the Farisons added a few office buildings to the residential plot, and in 1996 they moved to another home and converted the estate into an office with only a few renovations. "We put in ceiling lights — we didn't have to do much," Farison admits.

"It has a homey feel for me." – Kristen Hampshire



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Kurth's competitiveness and love for the lawn care industry contributed to his own successful career as well as that of many others.

By Cindy Code

Terry Kurth's father can remember the War like it was yesterday. Vividly, Harold "Hub" Kurth can recall being a sergeant on patrol in the South Pacific when he came under gunfire. One of his men was shot. He picked him up, hauling him on his back away from the gunfire. His comrade didn't survive, but he saved Kurth's life, the fallen man's body protecting him from a spray of bullets.

He grows quiet. He can talk about his deceased wife without crying, but when it comes to reflecting on his two-and-a-half years fighting in World War II, he grows somber. He can remember the War like it was yesterday.

Terry Kurth, 49, didn't fall far from the family tree. His life has been discernibly marked by the words and actions of his 79-year-old father. His dad went on to become an honored policeman and a well-respected insurance adjuster, but he was always second-guessing himself because he didn't earn his college degree.

Kurth's life as an entrepreneur and a family man is rooted in his father's words and actions. "What I didn't want is someone else controlling my future, and I didn't ever want to look back and second guess myself," he says.

His childhood was the "classic baby boomer family with June and Ward Cleaver."

Raised with three siblings in a middle-income class family, he said he was extremely blessed to have not two parents, but four. His grandparents played an active role in his upbringing. His mom, Evelyn, died 12 years ago at the age of 65. "She was extremely

compassionate. If you couldn't get along with my mother, you couldn't get along with anyone."

Entrepreneurship in the Kurth household meant circling the neighborhood with a wagon collecting pop bottles to re-





Terry Kurth Profile

Name: Terry Kurth Company: Weed Man Location: Middleton, Wis,

- . Director of development, Weed Man, U.S. Operations
- Weed Man subfranchiser in Madison, Appleton/Green Bay and Milwaukee, Wis.
- · Former trainer, Scott's Co.
- Former owner, Barefoot Grass, Middleton, Wis. (1977-1997)
- · Past president, Wisconsin Turfgrass Association
- · Past president, Grounds Maintenance Association of Wisconsin

deem at the local grocery, or selling vegetables grown in the family garden.

Today, Kurth and his wife, Kathy, have four children who share the same passion and drive for living and shaping businesses as they do. Kurth claims that the education he received, similar to the education he sought for his children, helped shape his vision and instincts for successful entrepreneurship.

"Kathy and I met in high school. There were 125 kids in our graduation class," he recalls. "We wanted our kids to go to schools with no more than 200 in a class. Everyone has a need for recognition no matter what career path you choose. It's pretty easy to get lost."

A small school setting, he believes, can help shape key characteristics for life including respect and love for others, independence, communication and cooperation skills, competitiveness, integrity and, most importantly attitude. "If you have the right attitude, you can gain any other skill," he emphatically states.

While Kurth and Kathy set real-life parameters for how to be successful in business, he said the one thing they can't take credit for is his drive.

Indeed, the entire Kurth family has high standards of dedication. Their oldest daughter, Amanda, 24, is in her second year of med school at the University of Wisconsin. In high school, she nearly graduated 12th in her class, but she knew her father finished 11th in his high school class. So she burned the midnight oil during finals and jumped into the top 10 in her graduating class.

GETTING STARTED. Kurth began his green industry career working for The Scotts Co.'s Professional Turf Institute writing technical books and teaching training seminars. He was teaching a seminar in Boise, Idaho, when Kathy's father died of a heart attack.

"She was in Ohio and I was 2,000 miles away," he reflects. "Looking back, it helped me make the decision to go into business for myself. I was in a field where I started seeing dads

2002 Leadership Award Winners

leaving home on Sunday or Monday and being gone for the week. We didn't have any kids, but we were buying a house and starting to fill the bedrooms."

In the summer of 1977, chinch bugs were doing some serious damage to lawns in Columbus, Ohio. Employees of Barefoot Grass Lawn Service were doing everything they could to keep up with sales and service. Kurth began running leads on Saturdays to help out. He enjoyed the experience so much that he decided to open a Barefoot Grass franchise in Madison, Wis., named Lawn Care of Wisconsin, Inc.

"Kathy was eight months pregnant, but what did we have to lose?" he recalls. "My parents were supportive—we lived with them initially—and off we went. We were running leads like crazy. I remember sitting on my mom's washer and dryer making sales calls to follow up on leads."

His competitiveness was such that he was selling non-stop, even as Kathy was in labor with their first child. "I had one hand on the small of her back due to her back labor, and a phone in the other hand making sales calls. Talk about incentive; we had another mouth to feed."

The late 1990s were the golden age of lawn care. TruGreen opened in Madison the same year Kurth started Barefoot; and ChemLawn was already there. In his first year, he sold 275 accounts totaling \$44,000. He hit his goal, drawing a salary of \$16,000.

Kurth had never sprayed a lawn himself when he opened his first franchise. He simply signed the contract, ordered the materials and purchased a truck. Ted Shackelford, a Barefoot Grass employee and future franchisee, literally showed him the ropes the night he picked up his truck on his way to Madison.

In the early days of the business, Kathy managed accounting and administrative repsonsibilities. And through the births of their four children — Amanda, Krista, 22, Andrew, 21, and Brandon, 16 — the Kurths ran their business out of their home.

"It was a neat picture; sitting on my family room floor with my routing forms and my two daughters beside me coloring," he recalls.

Over the next several years, he grew the business organically and through new franchise locations. He grew the Madison business to \$1.3 million and, along with three other business locations in Peoria, Ill.; Lexington, Ky.; and Appleton/Green Bay, he sold his 12,000 accounts and more than \$3 million in annual sales to TruGreen in December 1997.

But, more than growing a business, Kurth thrived on being a mentor. With his franchise in Madison a few years old, he recruited friend Curtis Winter to help out as an applicator. Winter worked extremely hard, learning all facets of the business. He later became general manager, allowing Kurth to focus on his vision for expanding the business.

"If given a choice between visionary/entrepreneur and administrator, I'll take vision any day," he says. "I enjoy creating a vision and selling people into that vision using the strengths of individuals and knowing your weaknesses."

Kurth said he couldn't have done it without Winter, who became like a brother to him. Winter brought some hands-on experience from a short stint with ChemLawn, but it was his Marine Corps background and ability to lead people and overcome challenges that Kurth admired.

They bonded and on a handshake deal they grew the business together. "It's nice having that kind of experience. It's one of the things you look for in business," Kurth reflects. With Winter's own family scattered in several states, Terry and Kathy were there for him when he had a heart attack in his early 40s. He recovered nicely and he currently has majority interest in Badgerland Irrigation, which Kurth partially owns.

"It's extremely rewarding seeing my associates become successful managers, improve their income level and buy their first house," he says. "If I see someone take a lateral or lesser job, I feel like a failure. I don't mind losing someone to a better position — even outside the industry."

One of Kurth's most challenging moments in business was in 1988. He was celebrating his 10th anniversary. His company offered customers a deluxe fungicide program to manage leaf spot in the summer and snow mold over the winter. But, suddenly, burn spots started appearing in about 250 of his customers' green, lush lawns.

Because he couldn't figure out what was happening, he called in one of his industry friends, a University of Wisconsin plant pathologist, who said the brown spots looked like Atrazine damage. To determine if that was the case, Kurth and a superintendent friend with a test plot applied the product and asked representatives to fly in and view the damage. It turned out that during the product bagging process some Atrazine — used as for weed control — got into the fungicide.

Once the problem was diagnosed, Kurth set to work to correct the problem. He created a slurry made up of activated charcoal to neutralize the Atrazine in his customers' lawns, before repairs could begin. Then he filled a truck with water under pressure and blasted the black off clippings.

"We teach our people that you're always going to have a moment of truth, but you can turn a bad situation into a good one. Always under-promise and over-deliver." — Terry Kurth

2002 Leadership Award Winners

"I enjoy creating a vision and selling people into that vision using the strengths of indivivals," says Terry Kurth. No. 170 High state of state of

The lawns were then repaired by seeding or sodding.

To complete the pro-

cess, Kurth hand-delivered a 10-pound box of steaks with a hand-written note to each of his customers. The note said, "We hope this leaves a good taste in your mouth."

His company was the recipient of the top Blue Chip award from the state Chamber of Commerce.

"My customers were great. We only lost three because of the problem," he says. "We teach our people that you're always going to have a moment of truth, but you can turn a bad situation into a good one. Always under-promise and over-deliver."

BACK AGAIN. After selling his business to TruGreen in 1997 and taking six months off to re-charge his batteries and work through his "honey-do" list, Kurth said he had to return for the fun of the hunt and to stay mentally challenged. So when Roger Mongeon, president of Turf Holdings, the group that brought the Weed Man franchise system to the United States, came calling, Kurth sat down and held lengthy conversations with Mongeon about the U.S. lawn care industry. Ultimately, Kurth was integral in attracting key lawn care operators throughout the nation to Weed Man, bringing legitimacy and immediate growth to the fledgling U.S. franchise firm.

Today, Kurth is director of development for the U.S. operations of Weed Man. He is also one of 12 Weed Man subfranchisers and he holds interest in three franchise locations: Madison, Appleton/Green Bay and Milwaukee. Additionally, Kurth has ownership in five Christmas Decor franchises.

Still, more than his own success, Kurth enjoys setting the stage for others to achieve. In addition to Winter's success story, Kathy's nephew, Doug Cleary, manages the Madison franchise that opened last spring. He has 35 percent ownership.

"He had 15 years with UPS and with little college or business experience, our sales are now more than \$250,000 in less than two years," he says. "He works his tail off. The equalizer is that he's not working on Christmas Eve."

Kurth believes similar financial opportunities exist today for those interested in owning a lawn care business. Certainly, there are challenges like restricted telemarketing rules, pesticides regulations, competition and so on. But, where lawn care was once considered a luxury, today it's more like power steering in a car, he said. It's become much more accepted as a business. He's a firm believer in the power of franchising

and, in particular, the systems and branding that are designed for a franchisee to hit the ground running.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY. Along his successful road, Kurth has learned from many mentors.

"Mom was real caring and compassionate; while dad's competitive spirit and risk taking with integrity are keys to my success." Additionally, his college professor, Dr. J.R. Love, insisted

on learning the two "C's" in life: communications and cooperation. "You will be successful if you master these," his professor told him. "Talk about a guy who was ahead of his time. He never actually called it team building, but it was."

Certainly, he says, his wife has been his Rock of Gibraltar.

"For Kathy to marry a guy like me — Mr. Outspoken — and not shrink into a shell," he says almost with amazement. "Her emotional support and unwavering faith — to have that is extremely important. Family has kept me balanced, so I don't go over board. For some people, work becomes all consuming."

His philosophy of "work hard, play hard, and have fun along the way" has resulted in numerous friendships. "They're more than business associates, they're friends," Kurth says. "That's invaluable to me. We share ideas, we know each others' families; we're there for each other."

His friends find his no nonsense approach to business, and life, refreshing. Phil Fogarty, a Weed Man sub-franchiser in Cleveland, Ohio, says Kurth has an uncanny ability to put people together and to get people to buy into his passion for things. "There's no one I know who's more pro lawn care and has more fun in our industry," he says laughing. "He just has a blast. He's always talking about a deal or another way to make something work."

"He has great leadership qualities and a propensity for making money," adds Lou Wierichs, Pro X Lawn Care, Appleton, Wis. "He's very honest; what you see is what you get. He can be very tough: business is business and friendship is friendship. If you need him, he's there for you."

As past president of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association and the Grounds Management Association of Wisconsin, Kurth says he didn't feel that he had a choice but to give back to the industry that treated him so well.

"I can never pay back my parents for what they've done for me; a piece of my mom lives through me," he reflects. "Because you can't pay back, you must pay forward. You pay forward through your kids, your industry and your time. There are many things in the world you can buy, but respect is not one of them," he says. "It makes you sleep at night."

The author is business director, corporate accounts, Lawn & Landscape magazine.

Joe Reynolds isn't afraid to speak his mind, especially when it comes to defending the lawn care industry.

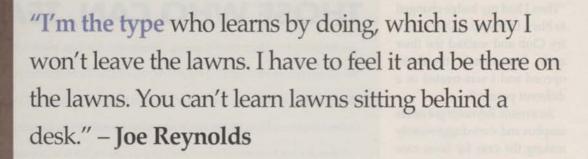
By Bob West

SET OLDS

Different people include some of the same ingredients when they define the word leadership. Vision. Wisdom. Communication. Ambition.

Being a leader doesn't require possessing all of these traits, but they certainly help. Still, most individuals' lists will include one other particular characteristic they think a vast majority of leaders possess – commitment and an unwavering pursuit of purpose.

That's certainly the case with Joe Reynolds, lawn care service manager for Black Diamond Lawn Care, Toledo, Ohio. A career lawn care devotee, Reynolds loves enhancing the environment, working with employees and educating those inside and outside of the



industry about the benefits of lawn care.

But perhaps what Reynolds loves more than anything is taking part in a good old-fashioned debate. Remembering back to the days when Reynolds and his four siblings sat down with their parents for dinner, he still laughs recalling the passionate exchanges that took place over a nightly meal. "Talk at the dinner table was always about one of two things – politics or religion," he notes with a chuckle.

Today, Reynolds has found a way to combine his two loves – the lawn care industry and standing behind an issue – as he looks for any and every opportunity to defend lawn care operators as anything but the "black sheep of the turfgrass industry." Standing up for his beliefs means occasionally ruffling feathers or offending people who don't agree with his beliefs, and that's all right with Reynolds.

"I guess I'm just a rebel with a cause," he affirms.

ARE YEW CRAZY? Reynolds started with Black Diamond Lawn Care in 1972 as an employee in the company's nursery. While that time didn't necessarily show Reynolds the direction he wanted

to follow for his career, he did learn what he didn't want to do during his early days at Black Diamond.

"I learned very quickly that I wasn't keen on the nursery industry and the heavy labor unloading 500 Japanese yews," he points out. "Still, I appreciate those days because that's when I learned all my shrubs and ornamentals. You have no choice but to learn when you're unloading 500 of anything, but that information still serves me well today."

Reynolds continued working at Black Diamond while putting himself through college the University of Toledo. His career path still wasn't clear enough to him to direct his studies, so his love for a good argument pointed him in the direction of political science, whether his father approved or not. "He didn't like my major, and I still remember him coming up to me right after my graduation, putting his arm around me and saying to me, 'OK, now say something in political science,'" Reynolds recalls affectionately. "That's where I come from in terms of always speaking my mind. But he and my mom were both always great about encouraging us to go to school so that we really learned how to think, and I owe them a lot for that."

Reynolds took his degree with him as we went back to Black Diamond as he began moving through the company's ranks, assuming responsibility for larger routes and ultimately helping the firm open new branches in Michigan and Texas. At the same time, a fire for the industry was slowly building within him. All he needed was the right spark to really ignite it, and he found this spark walking the aisles of an industry show.

"Attending trade shows, I always felt that the vendors looked at us differently than they did the golf course superintendents," Reynolds maintains, adding that the general public seemed to treat the two professions differently as well. "You would see people quoted in newspaper talking about home lawn care and they don't have a clue because they're tending to their 120 acres.

"I wanted to prove my theory, so I walked a trade show eight or 10 years ago, and my name tag said Black Diamond

🛪 Joe Reynolds Profile

Name: Joe Reynolds

Company: Black Diamond Lawn Care

Location: Toledo, Ohio Career Highlights:

- · Graduated from the University of Toledo with a degree in political science
- Helped open two Black Diamond Lawn Care branches in Michigan and Texas
- · Has taught Owens Community College turfgrass students for nine years

Lawn Service," he continues. "Then I had my badge changed to Black Diamond Golf & Country Club and walked the floor again. Immediately, the doors opened and I was treated as a different person."

As a result, Reynolds got on his soapbox and started aggressively making the case for lawn care professionals. "I don't have any problem with golf course superintendents, but they take care of 120 acres and control all of the cultural things, while we take care of thousands of lawns where we control nothing," he points out with the passion evident in his voice. "But we're not considered the professionals? That's ridiculous, and that really bothers me. So I turned it into my fight. I'd like to see a superintendent not control the mowing and the irrigation on the property, see the property only every eight weeks and still create a program that caters to the customers' needs and keeps them happy."

THOSE WHO CAN, TEACH

Joe Reynolds has heard the old saying, "Those who can't do, teach." But he's quick to discourage people from belittling the efforts required by teachers based on his experience. Plus, spending the last nine years teaching in the turfgrass program at Owens Community College has shown Reynolds teaching's value when it comes to your own continuing education.

"I was at a golf tournament when I met the guy teaching the first turf class at Owens, and he talked about expanding the program," Reynolds recalls. "I made myself available to help him grow, and he promptly took me up on that."

While Reynolds expects this to be his last year teaching for some time so he can spend more time with his12-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter, he looks forward to one day returning to the classroom. "Teaching is incredibly rewarding," he explains, referring to the personal and professional benefits he gains by dispensing wisdom. "I think if there's one fault lawn care people have, and plenty of them are guilty of this, is that they stop learning. When you teach, you can never stop learning because you have to be always teaching new ideas. That means you have to learn them yourself. That's what I love the most."

Today, he takes pride in the time he spent with future turfgrass managers. "I've always been cognizant of the expression that 'those who can't do, teach,' but I think I've proven otherwise." – Bob West

MULCH ADO. The golf course

superintendents certainly aren't the only group Reynolds is willing to challenge. And he readily admits that some of his views on lawn care and landscape practices are not popular or welcomed in all circles. For example, Reynolds maintains that mulching mowers have had a profound effect on lawn care practices, and not for the better.

"Everything we've done for my first 22 years in this industry was with people bagging clippings," he points out. "And all of our lawn care control data was done with bagging mowers that took our problems off the property. Now, we return everything to the environment.

"As a result, I don't think we can control crabgrass – it's a mathematical impossibility because of the number of seeds," he continues, growing more excited with every word. "With a mulching mower, those 1,000 seeds are always on the lawn. With bagging, you may only be going after 50 seeds out of those 1,000, and best control will only eliminate 95 percent. Just do the math."

Reynolds has gathered his own research on the matter for the last few years, and he acknowledges that various folks in the industry have told him he might be better off keeping his ideas to himself. But he was never taught to do that during the heated dinner-time debates growing up, and he's not about to stay silent now.

"I'm starting to see problems that I think are causal/relationship to the mulching mower," he concludes. "I think this is true for fungus as well. People tell me that I don't want to be the one to say this because this really says that we need to use more pesticides. I'm not advocating that, but I think there's an issue here that needs to be examined.

"What does this all mean? Do we have to live with a few more weeds? That's up to the homeowner," he relates. "I only wish I was in school so I could take a couple of years off to talk to other lawn care guys and research this or write a thesis."

Obviously, such conspiracy theory-esque claims make Reynolds sound like something of an environmentalist, a label he doesn't entirely shun. "Am I an environmentalist? Well, I think about the environment first before anything else because I have to live in it," he acknowledges. "Nothing bothers me more than seeing a competitor out there doing something "Nothing bothers me more than seeing a competitor out there doing something stupid that gives the industry a bad name. Have we earned our reputation as black sheep of the industry? Yeah, there is some reason why we are viewed as nothing more than guys with a truck and a sprayer. That's why I got involved – to bring our image up. We do a phenomenal job as an industry, but we also shoot ourselves in the foot." – Joe Reynolds

stupid that gives the industry a bad name. Have we earned our reputation as black sheep of the industry? Yeah, there is some reason why we are viewed as nothing more than guys with a truck and a sprayer. That's why I got involved – to bring our image up. We do a phenomenal job as an industry, but we also shoot ourselves in the foot."

True commitment is most evident when people endure the rough road that one must travel to have true integrity. Reynolds uses the common phrase of "the high road" to define this path for him, and he hopes to never leave it, regardless of the difficulties it entails. "I'll give you a great example, and I pay this price every day," he points out. "I make my employees wear long-sleeve shirts because that's the law. They get mad when they see our competitors out there wearing short-sleeves, and they ask me why they can't wear them as well. That's a hard one to answer, but I hold fast."

And Reynolds isn't afraid to wish for more of what most business detest the most—government regulation. "I wish there

was more funding for state ag people so that they could go after these unprofessional businesses," he proclaims. "Ultimately, these guys who screw up are going to hurt us all. Why do they act like this? It's because they don't have any thirst for knowledge or learning once they learn how to push a spreader."

Reynolds may have some hopes for the future, but he doesn't have any clear expectations for what lies ahead for him. Still, he knows that his passion for raising the industry's professionalism isn't waning, and he's not backing down from any challenges. "I think the industry is facing some changes ahead. I can't put my finger on it, but I think we'll have to change our thinking with fertility, water quality issues and so forth. That will require people who really pay attention to what's going on. You have to stay focused and involved and not just put your head in the sand."

The author is Editor/Group Publisher of the Lawn & Landscape Media Group.

PUTTING HIMSELF ON ICE

Joe Reynolds loves basketball. He played it throughout his youth and still loves the game today. But his 12-year-old son is a hockey junkie. Reynolds appreciates the fact that hockey season coincides nicely with his slowest time of work, allowing him to be involved in this facet of his son's life. But he learned the hard way just how involved his son wanted him to be.

"I had never been on skates in my life, and one year it came time for the father/son hockey game for my son's league," Reynolds recalls. "I didn't really think about it since I couldn't skate, but my not playing left my son in tears. So I told him I would learn the game and how to play so I could be in the game the next year."

And learn how to play he did. In fact, Reynolds now plays twice a week, calling hockey "a great outlet for a lot of the aggression I seem to build up." And he points to a picture taken of his son and himself after a subsequent father/son game, with both wearing their uniforms, as one of his prized possessions. "That's something that's really special to me," he affirms.

The industry's fun-loving, accomplished researcher just wants to be considered 'one of the guys.'

By Nicole Wisniewski Some people delicately carve their career paths, forging curves and turns where they believe life should bend. Others follow the road as it goes, unaware of what's ahead, guided by gut feelings and the refreshment of change.

One could say Barry Troutman, technical services director, ValleyCrest Cos., Calabasas, Calif., is a little bit of both personality types. Despite the fact that this July was Troutman's 25th anniversary in the lawn care industry, he talks about his work as if it's new and fresh — as if he's still that young child mowing lawns in Toledo, Ohio, while the unknown and wondrous bears full steam ahead.

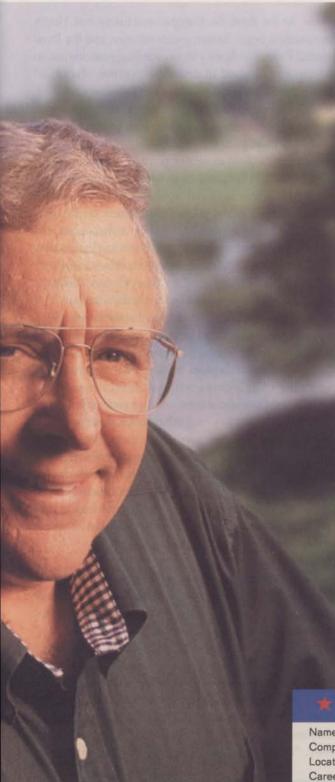
"Peter Pan had it right — he said if you choose to grow up, life is over," Troutman says, answering with an "18" when asked his age. "So, I've spent my life trying not to grow up. Even though I'm a gray-haired, fat, ugly guy, I think of myself as pretty young."

Though Troutman has never been accused of not having a good time — "If you're not having a good time, you're not really involved," he says — he also has become for the industry what his best friend Adam Jones calls "a mentor and a huge influence on the technical part of the business."

My understanding of turfgrass agronomy was developed in a large part by him early on. He had a great impact on me," says Jones, vice president, director of quality assurance, GreenUP Lawn, Tree & Shrub Care from Massey Services, Orlando, Fla.

Those who cross Troutman's path, maybe with a turfgrass problem or question about a tree disease, leave saying the same thing — "he's an effective communicator, whether the information he's teaching is technical or rudimentary," Jones says. "He assesses the needs of the person he's talking with and adjusts his language ac-





cordingly, becoming highly believable and having an excellent command of the language."

But if you tell Troutman about these achievements, he becomes completely modest. For instance, though he was the first president of the Georgia Turfgrass Association, he will not return to their annual meetings because he says he receives too much attention. "I don't like to go anymore because they introduce me and recognize me and I don't like that," he says. "They call me an icon in the industry, but I don't want to be that — I just want to be one of the guys."

THE EARLY DAYS. Though Troutman did mow lawns as a way to earn spending money when he was a child, he only did it until he got a paper route. "I never dreamed I wanted to do lawn care for a living," he says.

His first real premonition that turf care was in his future came at The Ohio State University, Columbus, when he was taking a career analysis test, "where after you answer all the questions you are magically supposed to find out what you are meant to do," Troutman says. "I struggled in undergraduate school with what I wanted to do. I told a school counselor that I could see myself working outdoors in a short-sleeved shirt helping people. And 25 years later, look at me. I'm a guy wearing a short-sleeved shirt who's working outside and helping people — exactly what I wanted." The test helped him identify golf courses as a place to start.

During high school and college, Troutman worked at a local golf course and thought he wanted to be a superintendent. So, he returned to school — this time at the University of Rhode Island to pursue a master's degree in turf weed science. "I fell in love with research and at the same time saw that being a golf course superintendent wasn't what I wanted," he says. "I realized that successful people were changing courses every

Barry Troutman Profile

Name: Barry Troutman

Company: ValleyCrest Cos.

Location: Calabasas, Calif. (headquarters), Orlando, Fla. (Troutman's location)

Career Highlights:

- . Technical services director, ValleyCrest Cos.
- Training director, Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA)
- · Research weed scientist and technical director, ChemLawn
- · Research scientist and adjunct professor, Turfgrass Science
- · Past president, Georgia Turfgrass Association
- . Doctorate, weed science, University of Arkansas
- Master of science degree, turfgrass management, University of Rhode Island
- · Bachelor of science degree, botany, The Ohio State University



four or five years and not always at their own desire. So, instead, I started looking into being a turfgrass professor."

The practical, hands-on knowledge that resulted from working countless hours on research plots came when Troutman hit the books once again to receive a doctorate degree in weed science at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Ark.

Troutman's first job was as a research weed scientist for ChemLawn in 1977. After about four seasons, Troutman accepted a job as zone technical manager and supervised as many as 14 regional agronomists. Following five or six years in that position, he branched out to work for the whole east region of the country. "The job was made in heaven for me," Troutman says. "The company operated the best research team in the United States and probably better than any university at the time. I learned a tremendous amount about turfgrass and how to manage lawns. I learned more in 10 years there than I learned anywhere."

These times — "the early days," Troutman calls them — were when the technical side of lawn care drove the business more than the sales side. Troutman's biggest mentor at this time was Bob Miller, who ran the technical side of ChemLawn. "He set the standard for how we treated customers, the way we communicated with customers and the programs and materials we used," Troutman says of Miller. "At one time, ChemLawn had 14 doctorate-holding turf scientists in the business. Those days were like the dot.com days for the industry. To this day, when I'm faced with various scenarios, I still think about what Bob would do in this situation."

Also, in those days, "we could do no wrong," Troutman added. "If we screwed up, the customer stayed with us. There was one instance in Wichita, Kan., where we were growing Bermudagrass on some lawns and bluegrass on others. Our equipment failed and the Bermudagrass accidentally ended up on the bluegrass. As a result, we killed most of the bluegrass lawns we treated. We went to our customers to say we made a big mistake and we reseeded the lawns and paid some clients' water bills for the summer — we took care of our customers."

In the late 1980s/early 1990s, after Ecolab bought ChemLawn and then sold ChemLawn to TruGreen, Troutman left, and he consulted with various universities and lawn care companies for six months until he took a job as the educational director for the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA).

Through PLCAA, Troutman got to know a lot of people in the

industry. At the time, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration began hazard communication and the Environmental Protection Agency began attacking pesticide use, so Troutman was involved in drafting supportive educational pieces for the industry, including messages about grasscycling. "It was neat to have been there when we were coming up with ideas that would one day become common vocabulary in the industry," he says.

He also got involved in writing point/counterpoint pieces for papers like *USA Today* and being interviewed on television, defending his fellow lawn care operators. Troutman admits that his most frightening, yet exciting moment on TV came when *Good Morning America* asked him to be on the opposite end of a point/counterpoint where he was defending the industry against a woman who claimed to be deathly ill because of lawn care applications, viewing herself as a canary in a cage, Troutman says. "That was hard — you can't go on the show and say, 'You idiot,'" he explains. "You have to respect that she feels that lawn care caused the problem and propose how to get around it. I didn't sleep the night before — I was a nervous wreck."

Luckily, Troutman received training from a retired news commentator while he was working at ChemLawn so he was able to communicate about these sensitive issues effectively.

"Doctor is an awfully nice thing to have before your name, but it can get in the way," Troutman says. "One of the problems is you're always perceived as an expert even if you don't know what you're talking about. You can't bluff and you have to be careful about what you say and do. Maybe one of the most brilliant things I learned is to know how to say, 'I don't know, but I can get back to you.' If I don't know something, I'll tell them I don't, but I'll always say I'll find the answer and get back to them."

BACK TO HIS ROOTS. By 1990, it was apparent to Troutman that lawn care consolidation was in full swing and the regulatory side of PLCAA was driving the industry more than the educational side. "I got burned out defending the industry," Troutman says. "I was tired of being on the front line."

As a result, Troutman moved to Orlando, Fla., to work for Massey Services, which was a pest control company that wanted to break into lawn care. He worked for what he calls a very charismatic Harvey Massey. "He had the business skills to understand how a business should be run," Troutman says of Massey. "But what he lacked was an understanding of the

TROUTMAN ON LEADERSHIP

"Leadership to me means involvement. To me, it means getting out there in front of the troops and showing them what to do. Leading is taking a guy who's not so certain and making sure he's certain. I guess that's the military definition of leadership vs. the command definition. Telling people what should be done and seeing it done is not my strong suit. Leading by example is how I like to do it."

"Peter Pan had it right — he said if you choose to grow up, life is over. So, I've spent my life trying not to grow up. Even though I'm a gray-haired, fat, ugly guy, I think of myself as pretty young." — Barry Troutman

technical side of the business and we struggled with that. As a result, the lawn care business got smaller before it started to grow. He had the wrong customer base — he wanted the upscale end of the business to be profitable and his customer base didn't reflect that. So we went through some changes."

The job was one of Troutman's most challenging and he says, "I came within hours of being fired a few times. I'm a practitioner — a horticultural agronomist — and he had me pegged in a management hole. I didn't realize when I started, but I knew early on that I would struggle."

After a little adjusting, Troutman finally was able to focus on what he wanted to do and, as a result, his seven-year stint at Massey helped the company's lawn care division become one of the most profitable in southern Florida — but at a price. "It wasn't terribly enjoyable at times," he says. "I ignored my family at those times. I worked seven days a week and sometimes wouldn't get anywhere with it."

Still, the optimist in Troutman adds, "But my fourth year there I was employee of the year. And I always remember that part of it fondly, though I wouldn't go through that again. It was like carrying a cat home by the tail — it's a sensitive area and there are a bunch of ways that cat can hurt you. I don't have to tell you that that's not the smartest thing to do. In general though, I'm proud of what I did at Massey."

Massey Services is also the place where Troutman met his best friend Jones. "I struggled through some tough times developing that lawn care business model and getting it to work and training people and Adam and I worked very well together. I needed someone like him to help — he taught me a lot about the tree and shrub business."

Though the two share nothing but compliments toward each other, they still tease. "Adam can't play golf worth a damn," Troutman laughs. "He's the only guy I ever worked with who I had to buy golf lessons for because I wanted to play golf with him and I couldn't stand it anymore."

And Troutman, or Mr.-Do-Anything-to-Help-Anybody, as Jones calls him, does have a slight weakness as well — organization. "He's a Mach 10 with his hair on fire kind of guy — not the most organized," Jones says.

TYPICAL TROUTMAN. Troutman worked long, hard hours at Massey Services for seven years, and though proud of the

work he accomplished there, the job wasn't progressing the way he thought it would and an opportunity came up with Environmental Industries, Inc., now known as ValleyCrest Cos., and he jumped on it. "It's the first time in my career that I worked for a company that controlled the whole operation of landscaping with commercial clients. With homeowners, they can screw it up even if you do the best job you can. But here, we do everything and have more control of the final outcome."

Troutman admits his typical week can cover the gamut of horticulture issues since he answers technical questions for ValleyCrest Cos. offices from as far west as San Antonio, Texas, to the East Coast in Boston, Mass., and from the northern U.S. in Chicago, Ill., to the southern tip of Miami, Fla. For instance, on this typical day, Troutman was in Washington, D.C., when his cell phone rang. Someone from Texas called who needed advice on managing dodder, also known as strangle weed, which is a parasitic seed plant that attaches to susceptible plants and twines around the stems. "There's not much you can do about [dodder], but in this instance, it was growing in front of the Anheuser Busch Brewery headquarters, and we didn't want anything to get in between people and their beer," Troutman jokes. "I ended up calling an expert at Texas A&M University and she told me all she knew about dodder. Then I passed the information along to the folks in Texas who needed help. Next week, I have to go to upstate New York to oversee the delivery and installation of 700 blue spruce trees. Each day is always different - I'm always learning something new."

These daily adventures will continue for Troutman, who says his plans for the foreseeable future include continuing his work with ValleyCrest Cos. and trying to improve his skills. "I don't see retirement in my near future," Troutman says. "There was a time in my life when I bought a lottery ticket every Friday. Now, I don't mess with it unless it's more than \$25 million. Even if I won all the money in the world, I'm not sure I would chose to lead my life a whole lot differently."

Though Troutman admits that his years of experience in the industry have served him well, he's still slow to accept the fact that he's truly become an industry leader. "I don't know if I've been as much of a leader," he says. "I think of myself more as a supporting actor."

The author is managing editor, Lawn & Landscape magazine.

Explore your Options.

Introducing **OPtions**. Your custom plan for replacing organophosphates.

Crossing over from organophosphates can be difficult and confusing. But it doesn't have to be. At Chipco, we understand that there's not just one product that can accommodate all your insect control needs. That's why we offer you OPtions: a unique, integrated insect management program that offers a full line of high performance products *and* experts to guide you. We'll work closely with you to develop a customized program that considers your target pests, application timing, control performance, formulation, and the need for resistance management.

Delta Gard The world's most popular pyrethroid.

DeltaGard with deltamethrin offers quick knockdown, broad-spectrum control, and good residual of more than 50 turf and ornamental pests, including ants, chinch bugs, mole crickets, and fire ants. And you get this control at low rates and at an affordable price, too.



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Sevin The world's most popular carbamate.

Versatile, dependable Sevin with carbaryl controls more than 130 pests, including billbugs, armyworms, cutworms, sod webworms, June beetles, chinch bugs, and white grubs. Sevin also offers quick knockdown and residual activity of 7 to 14 days. No wonder professionals have depended on the performance of Sevin for 35 years.

topichoice Fire ant control with fipronil.

This outstanding new granular formulation controls and then prevents fire ants. And you'll get this superior long-term control for up to a full year with a single low-dose broadcast application.

To start exploring your options, contact your Chipco representative today, or visit us online at www.bayerchipco.com.

The New BAYER ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE

Innovative products, experienced
management and industry support combine
to create a new leader in the professional
lawn care industry.

When the acquisition of Aventis CropScience by Bayer AG created the Professional Products unit of Bayer Environmental Science, a new leader in providing turfgrass solutions for the lawn care industry emerged. However, being a leader has less to do with size, or profit margins; rather, a leader continually strives to provide more effective solutions for the problems faced by lawn care professionals on a daily basis. Examining the efforts of this newly created company, one can certainly say the term "leader" rings true.



MERIT® - AN INDUSTRY STANDARD FOR EFFECTIVE, LOW DOSE GRUB CONTROL

Introduced in 1994, Merit® insecticide changed the way lawn care professionals face grub control by offering an effective preventive treatment. Today, Merit is known throughout the lawn care industry as the best option for avoiding grub damage — both preventive and curative.

When the acquisition of Aventis CropScience by Bayer AG created the Professional Products unit of Bayer Environmental Science, a new leader in providing turfgrass solutions for the lawn care industry emerged. However, being a leader has less to do with size, or profit margins; rather, a leader continually strives to provide more effective solutions for the problems faced by lawn care professionals on a daily basis.

Merit has the widest application window of all the preventive products available for grub control, due to its 120-day soil half-life and moderately low water solubility. This long residual control allows for season-long preventive control of the five major grub species — controlling grubs before any damage is done. Merit also offers unsurpassed curative control of white grubs during the predamage stage, before signs of turf injury are visible. Plus, the product offers broad-spectrum control of thatch, stem- and leaf-inhabiting insects (from May-September).

In this time of increased concern about the long-term effects of pesticide usage, Merit offers lawn care professionals and their customers peace of mind by providing highly effective control at levels unmatched by the competition — use rates 85 to 96 percent lower than most currently registered soil insecticides for use on turf. This low use rate means low risk to applicators, customers and other non-target organisms.

Bayer Environmental Science has recently introduced a new addition to the Merit product line—Merit 2F, now available in an 8.12 oz. (240 ml) bottle. Packaged six bottles to a box, Merit 2F contains 2 lbs. active ingredient per gallon in an easy-to-use flowable formulation. The

new packaging is designed as a convenient spray bottle for treating individual trees and landscape plants, and spraying ornamental foliage. Each bottle will treat four 18-inch trees. For best results, applicators should start foliar treatments prior to establishment of high pest populations and reapply on an asneeded basis.

DURSBAN/DIAZINON ALTERNATIVES FOR EFFECTIVE INSECT MANAGEMENT

Lawn care professionals continue to face

the challenge of finding alternatives for Dursban™ and diazinon, two popular products for insect control. While replacing these widely used insecticides may seem like a daunting

task, Bayer Environmental Science now offers professionals a complete line of effective solutions for lawn and landscape insect control.

In addition to Merit, Bayer Environ-

mental Science offers products from the pyrethroid family of insecticides, widely regarded for providing broad-spectrum control of turf insects at some of the lowest use rates available. DeltaGard® brand deltamethrin, the world's most active and most widely used pyrethroid, provides broad-spectrum control of more than 50 insect species, including ants, fleas, ticks, chinch bugs, mole crickets, billbugs, and bluegrass weevils. Tempo®, another advanced-generation pyrethroid, provides extremely fast knockdown, as well as residual control of a



broad range of surface-feeding and foliar insects on turf and landscape ornamentals — at application rates 80 percent lower than most common organophosphate insecticides.



Sevin

Extensive research trials suggest that Sevin® outperforms Dursban for control of a number of common turf pests, including billbugs, cutworms, June beetles, and sod webworms. Sevin is active

range of insect control options at low use rates — both preventive and curative — offering lawn care professionals a number of effective solutions for their

Dursban/diazinon replacement needs. ContactyourBayerEnvironmentalScience sales representative for more information on developing a Dursban/diazinon replacement program that is

> right for your customers' needs.

EFFECTIVE, ECONOMICAL DISEASE CONTROL FOR THE LAWN CARE INDUSTRY

Bayer Environmental Science offers a range of products for turf disease problems on residential and commercial turf, providing a broad spectrum of disease control at rates and application intervals that make disease conlowest application rates available on the market – so low in fact, that the EPA has classified Compass as a reduced-risk compound. The mode of action of Compass allows the fungicide to securely lock into the plant surface, creating a protective reservoir for long-lasting and weather-protected disease control of such diseases as brown patch, anthracnose, leaf spot, and gray leaf spot.

Bayleton® fungicide offers superb control of dollar spot, a common disease found on residential turf. Where some products require application once every 10 days to maintain high levels of disease control, Bayleton applications every 21-28 days remain effective, allowing more breathing room for grass, flowers, foliage plants, shrubs, and shade trees. In fact, the fungicide's systemic action can provide lasting residual control up to 30 days or more, depending on application rate and environmental pressures.

The only fungicide available that provides effective control of both fairy ring (preventive and curative) and brown patch — two of the most common turf

DYLOX®

through both contact and ingestion, providing quick knockdown and thorough control of undesirable turf pests. Dylox® insecticide also provides fastacting control of surface-feeding and soil insects, including white grubs, mole crickets, sod webworms, and cutworms. A member of the organophosphate family, Dylox has already undergone review by the EPA (under terms of the Food Quality Protection Act), maintaining its registration and availability for turf use. Dylox is also the industry standard and a trusted solution for rescue treatments of grubinfested turf.

Whether used alone or in combination, the Bayer Environmental Science line of insecticides provides a broad-

COMPASS[™]

trol an affordable option for lawn care professionals.

Compass[™] fungicide provides excellent broad-spectrum disease control on commercial and residential turf at the diseases found on home lawns—applications of Prostar® fungicide stay effective two to three times longer than common contact fungicides. Prostar is also an excellent tankmix component, and

> can be applied along with a lawn care professional's normal pesticide applications.

Selling customers on the need for turf disease control can often be a difficult task for lawn care professionals. However, incorporating these



Bayer Environmental Science offers a range of products for turf diesease problems on residential and commercial turf, providing a broad spectrum of disease control at rates and application intervals that make disease control an affordable option for lawn care professionals.



Bayer Environmental Science fungicides into normal turf management practices will ensure maximum disease control with minimum effort and product used — effective, economical disease control.

BROAD-SPECTRUM WEED MANAGEMENT WITHOUT HARMING DESIRABLE TURF

The herbicide products available from Bayer Environmental Science provide lawn care professionals with a range of solutions that offer a high level of weed control without damaging desirable turf.

Acclaim® Extra herbicide is one of the only postemergence herbicides that can effectively control crabgrass in a single treatment without harming tolerant desirable turf, making it an economical choice for home and commercial landscapes. Plus, Acclaim Extra provides control of goosegrass and other undesirable grasses.

Labeled for commercial landscapes and ornamental bed maintenance, Ronstar® herbicide offers season-long Finale® herbicide provides nonselective control of a broad spectrum of annual and perennial grasses and broadleaf weeds. Absorbed rapidly through green tissue, Finale produces visible results in one to four days without the herbicidal creep often associated with other nonselective herbicides, so that desirable turf remains unharmed.

Plus, Finale provides excellent

RONSTAR®

control of 25 broadleaf and grassy weeds, including goosegrass, crabgrass, and *Poa annua* with just one preemergence application. Plus,

Ronstar controls weeds through their shoots, unlike potentially harmful DNA herbicides, which are absorbed at the roots of plants, often injuring the roots of desirable turf in the process. postemergence weed control in cooler temperatures, when often other nonselective herbicides lose their effectiveness.



Acclaim® Extra

HERBICIDE



THE ACCOLADES® CUSTOMER REWARDS PROGRAM

Now entering its fourth year, the Accolades rewards program allows turf and ornamental professionals the opportunity to earn points for purchasing qualified program products. Professionals who enroll in the program receive special members-only promotions as well as points for their purchase of high-quality, reliable products like Merit and Compass. Points can then be redeemed for valuable rewards such as electronics, apparel, professional equipment and more.

In addition to the traditional reward items offered, Bayer Environmental Science has recently added a new business builder called **Bayer Grubstake**TM. Now,

the Accolades points lawn care professionals earn can be redeemed for marketing materials such as door hangers, print ads, professionally produced radio spots, and statement

stuffers, all personalized with their company's name, address, phone number, and logo. These materials are important for the continued growth of lawn

care businesses, and include information on grubs, ants, aphids, hemlock woolly adelgids, lerp psyllids, royal palm bugs, and scales.

Members get
ready — beginning in 2003, the Accolades program will include products
from the former Aventis line of turf care
products. Now lawn care professionals products will be able to earn points
for using trusted products like

DeltaGard, Sevin and others that you've already grown to rely on for effective pest control.

For more information (including a complete list of rewards), or to enroll in the Accolades Customer Rewards program, visit: www.accoladesrewards.com.

LEADERSHIP THROUGH STEWARDSHIP

The true test of a leader lies in their effort to go above and beyond what is expected of them for the greater good of the industry. That's why Bayer Environmen-



tal Science has implemented and maintains several important programs to provide lawn care professionals with the educational tools for continued success.

The Chipco Speakers Bureau, a free service offering continuing education to lawn care professionals, has provided turfgrass training to both local and national lawn care associations each month over the past year (including the National Parks Management Association). The Speakers Bureau was created to help lawn care professionals stay educated about the latest turf treatment products, maintenance tips and other industry-



The true test of a leader lies in their effort to go above and beyond what is expected of them for the greater good of the industry. That's why Bayer Environmental Science has implemented and maintains several important programs to provide lawn care professionals with the education tools for continued success.

related news. Through the program, research and development experts at Bayer Environmental Science offer non-promotional training on a range of topics important to the lawn care industry.

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Chipco[®] Academy[™], a free online product training program for lawn care professionals was also launched earlier this year. Chipco Academy is designed to offer end-user training on Chipco fungicide, herbicide, insecticide and PGR usage, online via www.bayerchipco.com.

Each Chipco Academy training program consists of information on target pests, product chemistries, benefits and application procedures. After reviewing the information presented, participants are quizzed online on the information presented. Upon successful completion of the quiz, professionals receive a certificate recognizing their training, along with a gift. Since its inception, turfgrass professionals have completed over 300 unique training sessions - approximately one a day - on such topics as fire ant control, organophosphate replacement and Poa annua management, with more modules planned for 2003.

In addition to providing financial support for many of the industry's trade associations — including PLCAA and ALCA — Bayer Environmental Science has partnered with Lawn & Landscape magazine to sponsor the School of Management and other seminars and

workshops through out the year. In addition, Chipco has worked with PLCAA to sponsor their lawn care training video series, "Turfgrass Training for Lawn Care Professionals," available

online at www.plcaa.org.

Bayer Environmental Science also invests in the future of the industry with the Bayer Turfgrass Scholarship program, providing college students who are interested in the industry with the funds they need to continue their education. In addition, Bayer Environ-

mental Science sponsors turfgrass and horticulture proficiency awards for the Future Farmers of America, encouraging high school students to pursue careers in the lawn care industry.

THE LEADERSHIP BEHIND BAYER ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

A new company is only as strong as the people behind it; **Josh Weeks**, former vice president of Chipco Professional Products and the newly-appointed head of the Professional Products Unit of Bayer E.S., has put in place a management team for the Green Industry Business that has extensive sales and marketing experience.

Heading Green Industry Business will be **Dan Carrothers**, former director of U.S. sales and marketing for Bayer Professional Care (see sidebar at right). Dan and his supporting sales and marketing teams are the "cream of the crop," and

Lawn Landscape
School of Management

TEAM OF LEADERS IN PLACE

In July 2002 Bayer Environmental Science announced several key appointments for its Professional Products Business Unit.

Primary among these appointments was the selection of Dan Carrothers to lead the company's efforts in the U.S. green industry. Other announcements included the appointment of Nicholas Harmon, Ph.D., to the position of dead of Ddvelopment and technical Services; as well as the selection of Montvale, N.J., as the North American heaquarters for Bayer Environmental Science.

Bayer Environmental Science was formed in 2002 from the acquisition of Aventis CropScience by Bayer AG. Bayer Environmental Science is a member of the worldwide Bayer Group, a \$27 billion international health care and chemicals group based in Germany.

are in place to further support the needs of lawn care professionals.

Innovative products, industry-wide support programs, and an experienced, responsive management team — the new Bayer Environmental Science has all of the pieces in place to continue providing the lawn care industry with the solutions and support professionals have grown to expect from an industry leader.

Dursban® is a registered trademark of Dow AgroSciences

2uotable LEADERS

Leadership and business

advice from noted leaders and executives.

"Management works in the system; leadership works on the system." — Stephen Covey, author

"Leadership is a matter of having people look at you and gain confidence, seeing how you react. If you're in control, they're in control." — Tom Landry, former head coach, Dallas Cowboys

"Leaders aren't born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal." — Vince Lombardi, former head coach, Green Bay Packers

"A good leader is a person who takes a little more than his share of the blame and a little less than his share of the credit." — *John Maxwell, author and leadership consultant*

"A leader is not an administrator who loves to run others, but someone who carries water for his people so they can get on with their jobs." — Robert Townsend, former CEO, Avis

"Look at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's not a day when you lounge around "Good business
leaders create a
vision, articulate the
vision, passionately
own the vision, and
relentlessly drive it
to completion." —

Jack Welch, former
CEO, General

Electric

doing nothing; it's when you've had everything to do, and you've done it." — Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister, Great Britain

"The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do. The hard part is doing it." — Norman Schwarzkopf, retired general, U.S. Army

"Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago." — Warren Buffet, CEO, Berkshire Hathaway

"Success is going from failure to failure without a loss of enthusiasm." — Winston Churchill, former Prime Minister, Great Britain

"Our company has, indeed, stumbled onto some of its new products. But never forget that you can only stumble if you're moving." — Richard Carleton, former CEO, 3M

"I use not only all the brains I have, but all I can borrow." — Woodrow Wilson, U.S. President

"Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all." — Dale Carnegie, author

"Show me someone who has done something worthwhile, and I'll show you someone who has overcome adversity." — Lou Holtz, college football coach

"Ruthlessly compete with your own best self." — Apollo 13 engineers

"People with humility don't think less of themselves, they just think about themselves less." — Ken Blanchard, author

"Believe it! High expectations are the key to everything." — Sam Walton, founder, Walmart

"Trust men and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great." — Ralph Waldo Emerson, philosopher

"Action may not always bring happiness; but there is no happiness without action." — Benjamin Disraeli, philosopher

"Mishaps are like knives, that either serve us or cut us, as we grasp them by the blade or the handle."

— Herman Melville, author

"Fortune befriends the bold." — *John Dryden,* philosopher

"Trying to lead men from behind makes you a driver and not a leader. A leader has to be ahead of his men. You've got to know what is going on all the time. Take the map with you and get up front." George Patton, former General, U.S. Army

"There aren't any great men. There are just great challenges that ordinary men like you and me are forced by circumstances to meet." — William F. Halsey, retired Admiral, U.S. Navy

"I walk slowly, but I never walk backward." — Abraham Lincoln, U.S. President

SOURCES:

The Quotable Executive by John Woods, McGraw-Hill Whatever It Takes by Bob Moawad, Compendium, Inc. Webster's Pocket Quotation Dictionary, Trident Press International

