



**Top to bottom, this industry is on the move and ever changing**

- 23. 10 Super small companies
- 24. 10 Great medium-sized firms
- 26. LM's Big 50—The industry's largest landscape and lawn care firms
- 28. Top 10 news picks
- 30. 10 From the past: Where are they now?
- 32. 10 Tough landscapes—Be glad you don't have these to maintain

## 10 Super small companies

### What makes a small company "super?"

### Care for customers and employees, and often much more

BY CINDY GRAHL

#### All Seasons Landscaping Hutchinson, MN

All Seasons serves commercial and residential customers with lawn care, landscape, irrigation, erosion control, renovation, snow removal, pond care and other services.

Owner Steve Wadsworth credits the \$3.7-million firm's diversity with its success — it can offer customers one-stop, start-to-finish projects. Word-of-mouth referrals allows All Seasons and its 50 employees to take work away from big firms without advertising.

#### Appletree Nursery and Landscape Construction Winnisquam, NH

Appletree's range of landscape services also includes a full-service garden center, and it fields a property patrol to watch over summer cottages



from November through March. Most revenues come from the design/build side (60%), with 30% going to maintenance and the balance to a variety of offerings. Owner Jay Rotonelli and many of the 26 employees in the \$1.1-million firm volunteer to paint and landscape women's shelters.

#### Farmside Landscape and Design, Wantage, NJ

Farmside offers design/build, installation and maintenance as an hon-

est product for dollar value, grossing \$2 million last year. Guided by their religious principles, owners Lisa and Miles Kuperus put extra effort into treating customers and employees with honesty and integrity, also achieving 95% employee retention.

#### Grasshopper Lawns Inc. Edwardsville, PA

Grasshopper handles lawn care for a 90% residential and 10% commercial client base. Michael Kravitsky IV heads the \$4-million family business, founded in 1964. He turns down unprofitable work and why not? The company boasts a 90% customer return rate. Grasshopper volunteers its time at Arlington National Cemetery, for PLCAA's Day on the Hill.

#### Green Earth Services, Inc. Columbia, SC

Green Earth built a positive reputation for professional quality maintenance for large commercial and industrial properties by putting communication first, for a 95% customer retention rate. The 20-year-old company provides several design/build and maintenance services, has 45 employees and reached \$3.2 million in revenue last year, said David Livingston, owner.

#### Lori Spielman Landscaping, Ellington, CT

LSL is the largest female-run firm in the state, earning \$5 million. For more than 17 years, Spielman has dedicated 50% of her services to wetlands mitigation, while also pro-



All Seasons Landscaping

viding a variety of landscape services in the area. Half of the landscape work is commercial, 30% residential and 20% government. Customers dig the employees' cleanliness, pin-striped trucks and natty uniforms, she notes.

#### Lucas Lawn Care Medina, OH

Lucas is a 26-year-old family business. They're small, with \$500,000 in revenues last year, but can point proudly to a 100% employee retention. The specialty is lawn fertilization, as well as tree and shrub care and related services. Homeowners appreciate owner John Lucas' commitment to his community and his firm's impeccable service.

#### Valley Green Lawn Care St. Cloud, MN

Valley Green made \$500,000 in revenues from lawn care services, with one-third of its work in irrigation. Owner Michael Hornung says keeping promises and providing equal care



to small and large clients has been the 12-year-old firm's secret to success.

#### Work-a-holics Landscape Management, Naples, FL

Work-a-holics got its name from a customer 20 years ago, and has since lived up to it, notes owner Cullen Walker. Along with plenty of work effort, his 45 employees are responsible for each project they undertake, with crew leaders doing their own hiring, and are paid based on what they produce. Accounts are commercial and multi-family.

#### U.S. Lawns of New Orleans/Baton Rouge

This franchise was selected as franchisee of the year because of its



rapid growth (revenues doubled in 2000) and attention to the U.S. Lawns' business plan and policies.

The three-year-old commercial maintenance firm earned \$1 million last year and employed 18 workers, says owner Happy Lindeen.

# 10 Great medium-sized firms

**Most medium-sized firms have been around for a while. Learn what they've learned about being "great"**

BY VICKY POULSEN

## **Aldo 1 Landscaping & Lawn Service Inc., Ocean, NJ**

Competitive prices and top quality service with a personal touch keep Aldo 1 Landscaping & Lawn Service Inc. ahead of its competition. "I look at each project and property — no matter what the size — as if it was my own," says Chris Aldarelli, president of the 12-year-old firm, which serves a 50/50 mix of commercial/residential accounts. That philosophy may be responsible for an 18% increase in revenues from 1999 to 2000, to \$12.1 million. This full-service firm employs 150 workers during the season and still serves 40% of their original customers.

## **Allin Companies Erie, PA**

Snow is bringing in the green for John Allin's firm, where gross revenues for landscape and snow services jumped from \$2.1 million in 1999 to \$6.5 million in 2000. Projected revenues for 2001 are \$12.5 million, with revenue goals set for \$18 to \$20 million in 2002. "Our phenomenal growth has come predominantly from increased snow revenues due to a national presence in over 14 states," he says. Key services include landscape design/build, maintenance and hardscape for commercial customers. Around 65 employees enjoy a comprehensive benefits package.



## **Barnes Nursery Huron, OH**

Barnes Nursery is the biggest firm within 100 miles, if excluding industrial and highway landscaping. On the

brink of its 50th anniversary, it scored \$14 million in revenues in 2000, in part due to the 400 acres of nursery stock it carries. Its composting facility ships about five trucks full of mulch and materials daily to local buyers, says owner Bob Barnes. The service palette runs the gamut from design to maintenance and several others. Most of the 125 employees have been around for a long time, just like the customers.

## **Dennis' 7 Dees Landscape Portland, OR**

Dennis' 7 Dees offers its 200 employees a strong training and edu-



cation program that aids in their professional growth and encourages them to achieve their CLT designation. In business for 45 years, this Snodgrass family-run firm maintains a 90% customer retention rate and services a 60/40 ratio of commercial and residential accounts. Revenues are projected at \$12 million in 2001, says David Snodgrass, president.

## **Gachina Landscape Management, Menlo Park, CA**

Strong community involvement and second-to-none customer service pay off for this commercial landscaping firm, which saw gross revenues jump 22% in 2000, to \$9.3 million. The 13-year-old Silicon



Valley company has a second location in Campbell, CA. President John Gachina says its 220 employees, mostly Hispanic, benefit from in-house English and landscape technician training.

## **Realty Landscaping Corp. Newtown, PA**

Known for quick customer response, Realty Landscaping has been in business since 1985, doing mainly design/build services for a 65/35 residential/commercial client base. It has branch offices in Oaks, PA and Burlington, NJ. Regional Manager David Plechner reports, "We have 65 crews spread over two, sometimes three states, which give us ability to rectify any problems within 24 hours." The company grossed \$10 million in 2000, and expects to hit \$11.5 million in 2001. An 80% employee retention rate is the result of benefits such as human resource management, which offers 108 employees everything from financial advice to counseling.

## **Yardmaster Inc. Painesville, OH**

Bringing trained landscape architects together with project managers, experienced installers and maintenance technicians has made Yardmaster Inc. a comprehensive resource for its residential and commercial clients. The company has five locations in Ohio and 250 employees to handle a mix of landscape design, construction and maintenance services grossing \$9 million in 2000, says Kurt Kluznik, CCLP and president. He serves on the advisory committee for high school and college landscape programs.



## **Greater Texas Landscapes Inc., Austin, TX**

A committed staff and a local presence give this mostly commercial landscape firm a competitive edge, notes Debby Cole, president. Approaching 20 years in business, Greater Texas provides mainly maintenance and related services (12% irrigation installation and service). She says 2000 gross revenues hit \$3 million and are likely to grow 15% in 2001. The company is noted for a strong customer relations program, which includes monthly focus groups and bi-monthly e-mail newsletters.

## **Thornton Landscape Maineville, OH**

Rick Doesburg ASLA, CCLP, and Thornton president, says employees count: "Our strong point is our ability to keep both our employees and our clients." Almost half of the company's 40 employees have worked at Thornton for 10 years or more, with six over the 30-year mark. The 40-year-old firm offers only design/build services to mostly commercial accounts. Revenues hit \$3.3 million in 2000. Doesburg says his company is not about selling plants but designs.

## **Del Conte's Landscaping, Inc., Fremont, CA**

Del Conte Landscaping is committed to building dependable relationships with both its customers and employees. The 29-year-old firm offers mostly commercial landscape installation service and earned \$6.5 million in 2000, a 43% increase over 1999. It aggressively trains its 115 employees and hosts a formal budget meeting each year where key employees and allies are involved in planning the company's direction, says President Tom Del Conte.

# LM100

## BIG 50 COMPANIES

If you have any doubt about the diversity and fragmentation of this industry, check out this listing of the industry's largest landscape maintenance, lawn care and landscape design/installation companies. While most of them concentrate on traditional landscape and lawn care services, several specialize in interesting side-lines like erosion control, retail garden centers, hydroseeding and rentals.

Company	Headquarters	Branches & franchises	Services	Other services
1. <b>Tru-Green LP</b>	Memphis, TN	400	MN, CM	SR, RV, GC, AC, NY
2. <b>Environmental Industries</b>	Calabasas, CA	60	55% D/BI, 45% MN	SR, RV, HS, GC, AC, EC, NY, IS
3. <b>The Davey Tree Expert Company</b>	Kent, OH	70+	1% D/BI, 98% MN, >1% IR	SR, RV, GC, AC, NY
4. <b>Brickman Group</b>	Langhorne, PA	78	15% D/BI, 80% MN, 5% IR	SR, RV, HS, AC, PL
5. <b>RBI (Randall &amp; Blake, Inc.)</b>	Littleton, CO	13	19% D/BI, 20% MN, 29% IR, 32% HS	SR, RV, HS, GC, AC, EC, PL, NY, ST
6. <b>OneSource Landscape &amp; Golf Serv.</b>	Tampa, FL	12	15% D/BI, 80% MN, 5% IR	SR, RV, GC, AC, PL, ST, IS, MN, aquatic, floriculture
7. <b>Gothic Landscaping</b>	Valencia, CA	4	15% D/B, 55% install, 10% MN, 20% IRGC	HS
8. <b>Weed Man</b>	Mississauga, Ont.	145	100% MN RV	NA
9. <b>Lawn Doctor</b>	Holmdel, NJ	405	100% MN	PS, AC, pH balancing, MN
10. <b>FirstService</b>	Toronto, Ont.	76	5% D/B, 55% install, 95% MN	SR, RV
11. <b>American Landscape Co.</b>	Canoga Park, CA	6	43% install, 18% MN, 29% IR, 10% NY sales	SR, RV, HS, GC, g.ctr., AC, EC, NY
12. <b>The Bruce Company</b>	Middleton, WI	1	35% D/BI, 18% MN, 2% IR, 14% GC, 19% retail	SR, RV, HS, GC, g.ctr., AC, EC, PL, NY
13. <b>Grounds Control Div. of Sanitons</b>	San Antonio, TX	6	35% D/BI, 50% MN, 15% IR	SR, RV, EC, HS, PL, horticultural care (chemical)
14. <b>The Groundskeeper</b>	Tucson, AZ	7	50% D/BI, 50% MN	RV, HS, GC, AC, EC
15. <b>Landscape Concepts</b>	Grayslake, IL	2	55% D/BI, 40% MN, 5% IR	SR, RV, HS, GC, AC, EC, PL
16. <b>Vila &amp; Son Landscaping</b>	Miami, FL	2	85% D/BI, 5% MN, 10% IR	RV, HS, NY
17. <b>Jensen Corporation</b>	Cupertino, CA	3	72% D/BI, 28% MN	RV
18. <b>Oak Leaf Landscape</b>	Anaheim, CA	1	60% D/BI, 5% MN, 30% IR	35% 550-650
19. <b>Scott Byron &amp; Co.</b>	Lake Bluff, IL	1	80% D/BI, 20% MN	RV, HS
20. <b>Marina Landscape</b>	Anaheim, CA	1	45% D/BI, 10% MN, 45% IR	RV, GC, AC, EC, PS, rental
21. <b>Lipinski Landscape &amp; Irrigation</b>	Marlton, NJ	2	50% D/BI, 35% MN, 15% IR	SR, RV, HS, AC, NY
22. <b>Teufel Nursery</b>	Portland, OR	1	40% D/BI, 40% MN, 20% IR	SR, RV, HS, GC, AC, EC, PL, NY
23. <b>Mariani Landscape</b>	Lake Bluff, IL	1	50% D/BI, 50% MN	SR, RV, HS, g.ctr., NY
24. <b>Scotts Lawn Service</b>	Marysville, OH	45	100% chemical app.	RV, PC, AC (chemical app)
25. <b>Naturalawn of America</b>	Frederick, MD	53	100% MN	MN
26. <b>The Celtis Group (fmlly Diablo Landscape)</b>	San Jose, CA	7	35% D/BI, 50% MN, 15% IR	RV, HS, AC, EC
27. <b>Duke-Weeks Landscape Services</b>	Duluth, GA	7	45% D/BI, 45% MN, 10% IR	SR, RV, HS, AC, EC, IS
28. <b>Spring-Green Lawn Care Corp.</b>	Plainfield, IL	56	100% MN	AC
29. <b>Tropics North</b>	Miami, FL	3	50% D/BI, 40% MN, 10% IR	AC
30. <b>Nanak's Landscaping</b>	Oriando, FL	4	20% D/BI, 80% MN	AC
31. <b>Cagwin &amp; Dorward</b>	Novato, CA	13	32% D/BI, 62% MN, 6% IR	RV, AC, EC
32. <b>AAA Landscape</b>	Phoenix, AZ	2	50% MN, 50% D/BI, IR	RV, GC, AC, EC, PL, NY
33. <b>Urban Farmer</b>	Thornton, CO	1	62% D/BI, 25% MN, 13% IR	SR, RV
34. <b>Park Landscape</b>	Santa Ana, CA	4	10% D/BI, 80% MN, 10% IR	SR, RV, HS, GC, AC, EC
35. <b>The Highridge</b>	Issaquah, WA	2	45% D/BI, 40% MN, 15% IR	SR, RV, HS, EC, PL, IS
36. <b>Keller Outdoor</b>	Sanford, FL	1	61% D/BI, 28% MN, 11% IR	AC, NY, dumpster roll service
37. <b>Lieds Nursery Co.</b>	Sussex, WI	2	60% D/BI, 30% MN	g.ctr., NY
38. <b>Post Landscape Group</b>	Atlanta, GA	4	48% D/BI, 46% MN, 6% IR	SR, RV, HS
39. <b>Western DuPage Landscaping</b>	Naperville, IL	2	65% D/BI, 35% MN	SR, RV, HS
40. <b>DuBrow's Nurseries</b>	Livingston, NJ	6	33% D/BI, 53% MN/SR, 14% IR	SR, RV, HS, g.ctr., AC, NY, lighting
41. <b>Clarence Davids &amp; Co.</b>	Matteson, IL	2	50% D/BI, 45% MN, 5% IR	SR, RV, HS, AC, PL, NY
42. <b>New Garden Landscaping &amp; Nursery</b>	Greensboro, NC	1	50% D/BI, 43.5% MN, 6.5% IR (services only)	SR, RV, HS, g.ctr., AC, PL, NY
43. <b>Dora Landscaping Co.</b>	Apopka, FL	7	45% D/BI, 40% MN, 15% IR	HS, NY, NY wholesale
44. <b>Lewis Landscape Design</b>	Las Vegas, NV	2	45% D/BI, 10% MN, 45% IR	RV, HS, GC, EC
45. <b>McFall &amp; Berry Landscape Mgmt.</b>	McLean, VA	5	20% D/BI, 80% MN	SR, RV, AC, EC, NY
46. <b>The Greenery Inc.</b>	Hilton Head, SC	3	46% D/BI, 38% MN, 6% IR, 10%	retail HS, g.ctr.
47. <b>Terrain Systems, Inc.</b>	Phoenix, AZ	0	80% D/BI, 20% MN	HS, NY
48. <b>ALDO1 Landscaping &amp; Lawn Serv.</b>	Ocean Twp., NJ	1	60% D/BI, 30% MN, 10% IR	SR, RV, HS, GC, EC, PL
49. <b>Clintar Groundskeeper Serv.</b>	Toronto, Ontario	9	6% D/BI, 92% MN, 2% IR	SR, RV, HS, AC
50. <b>Pro-Grass</b>	Wilsonville, OR	5	20% D/BI, 80% MN	EC

# Legend

**NOTE:** ASTERISK IN REVENUES MEANS BASED ON ESTIMATES FROM COMPETITOR, OTHERS ARE SELF-REPORTED  
**AC:** ARBOR CARE

**CM:** COMMERCIAL  
**DB / DBI:** DESIGN/BUILD; DESIGN/BUILD/INSTALL  
**EC:** EROSION CONTROL  
**GC:** GOLF COURSE

**g.ctr.:** GARDEN CENTER  
**GV:** GOVERNMENT  
**HS:** HARDSCAPE  
**ID:** INDUSTRIAL  
**IS:** INTERIORSCAPE

**IR:** IRRIGATION  
**LC:** LAWN CARE  
**MN:** MAINTENANCE  
**PC:** PEST CONTROL  
**PL:** POND/LAKE

**PS:** POWERSEED / HYDROSEED  
**RS:** RESIDENTIAL  
**RV:** RENOVATION  
**SR:** SNOW REMOVAL  
**ST:** SPORTS TURF

Client mix	Employees	Revenues	Expected changes	Years in Business	Principal	URL/e-mail
80% res., 20% CM	20,000	\$1,600,000,000*	—	27	Don Karnes, Pres.	webmaster@trugreenmail.com
100% CM	5,600	475,000,000	25% growth MN	51	Burton S. Sperber, Pres., founder/CEO	www.ervind.com
N/A	6,000	322,000,000	growth in all areas	120	Karl Warnke, Pres.	www.davey.com
2% RS, 95% CM, 3% GV/other	940	240,000,000	18% growth in all areas	62	Scott Brickman, CEO	www.brickmangroup.com
5% RS, 45% CM, 50% GV/other	900	77,500,000	30% growth D/B athletic fields; 50-75% less GC	26	Richard Randall, Pres.	Jody.Randall@RBICompanies.com
1% RS, 79% CM, 20% GV/other	1,400	65,000,000	10% growth in all areas	50	Ronald E. Schmoyer, div. Pres.	rschmoyer@2onesource.com
20% RS, 80% CM	1,100	63,250,000	11% growth in MN, 35% growth sales	17	Michael E. Georgio, CEO	mgeorgio@gothidandscape.com
95% RS, 5% CM	1,500	60,000,000	10% MN	31	Michael Kernaghan, COO	weed-man.com
96% RS, 4% CM	2,000+	59,700,000	9% growth chemical app.	33	Russell J. Frith, Pres.	www.lawndoctor.com
80% RS, 20% CM	650	46,000,000	11% growth MN	26	William Black, Pres., Greenspace Services	billblack1@aol.com
65% CM, 35% GV/other	550	34,000,000	15% growth in all areas	28	Mickey Strauss, Pres.	mtrauss@americanlandscape.com
30% RS 65% CM, 5% GV/other	500+	33,506,000	5% growth in all areas	49	Bliss Nicholson, Pres.	bliss@bruceco.com
20% RS, 80% CM	750	33,000,000	\$7 million growth MN, D/B	12	Al Honigblum, Pres.	ahonigblum@sanitorsinc.com
75% CM, 25% GV/other	700	29,000,000 to 30 M	—	25	Kevin Killmer, Pres./CEO	www.groundskeeper.com
100% CM	60	28,000,000	25% growth MN, 10% less D/B/I	20	Mike Kerton/Patar DeVore, owners	www.kertonlandscapeconcepts.com
10% RS, 40% CM, 50% GV/other	305	25,770,000	10-15% MN & NY, 0-5% less landscape	17	Juan C. Vila, Pres.	rickleal@vila-n-son.com
20% RS, 70% CM, 10% GV/other	215	24,830,000	10% growth in all areas	31	Scott McGilvray, Pres.	www.jensencorp.com
100% CM	350	24,000,000	—	30	Dennis Buccola, Pres.	www.oakleaflandscape.com
99.5% RS, 5% CM	110	24,000,000	5% growth D/B/I, MN	18	Scott Byron, Pres.	sbcohr@ix.netcom.com
100% CM	20	23,000,000	5% growth private; 10% less public	30	Robert Cowan, Pres.	www.marinaco.com
40% RS, 60% CM	85	22,500,000	10% growth in all	25	Robert A Lipinski, Pres.	rlipinskiland.com
5% residential, 80% CM, 15% GV/other	250	21,800,000	10% growth	110	Rick Christensen, Landscape Div. Mgr.	www.teufel.com
95% RS, 5% CM	300	21,200,000	10% in all areas	45	Frank Mariani, Pres./owner	frankm@mariani-landscape.com
90% RS, 10% CM	600	21,200,000	112% growth RS	4	Mark Long, VP, Scott's Lawn Service	bill.hoopes@scottscsco.com
98% RS, 2% CM	14	21,000,000	20-30% growth MN	14	Randy Loeb, VP	www.nl-amer.com
5% RS, 75% CM, 20%GV/other	300	20,000,000	7% growth MN	25	Barry L. Cohen, Pres.	mikegreye@diablolandscape.com
100% CM	230	20,000,000	20% in all	15	Mark Flowers, senior VP	barbara.dunn@dukerealty.com
90% RS, 5% CM, 5% GV	40	20,000,000*	5% in all	24	Tom Hofer, Pres.	www.spring-green.com
97% CM, 3% other	250	20,000,000	25% growth MN	30	Greg Proch, CEO	gregp@tropicsnorth.net
100% CM	390	19,800,000	12% growth MN	28	Sampurand Khalsa, Pres.	www.nanaks.com
95% CM, 5% GV/other	338	19,783,889	7% growth MN, AC; 4% less install	46	Dennis Dougherty, Pres.	wayne.richards@cagwin.com
85% CM, 15% GV/other	450	18,000,000	10% in all areas	26	Robert Underwood, Pres.	www.aalandscape.com
2% RS, 83% CM, 15% GV/other	220	17,300,000	10% growth MN/IR	18	Dave Tollefson, Pres.	urbandave@msn.com
95% CM, 5% GV/other	450	17,000,000	10% growth CM	15	Robert Morrison, Pres.	robertm@parklandscape.com
40% RS, 60% CM	300	16,000,000	2% growth MN	16	Phil Schuetz and Mike Bushmaker, owners	www.highridge.com
20% RS, 77% CM, 3% GV/other	200	16,000,000	10% growth in all areas	14	Bobby S. Keller, Pres.	None
70% RS, 30% CM	123	16,000,000	N/A	50+	Robert T. Lied, Pres.	rksappery@usa.net
20% RS, 80% CM	170	15,903,000	25% MN	11	William C. Lincome, senior VP	www.postlandscape.com
40% RS, 60% CM	160	15,010,000	5% CM	25	Steve Brodt, owner/Pres.	tomotka@wdlinc.com
10% RS, 90% CM	80	15,000,000	13% grounds MN	44	Michael Branch, COO	dubrows@aol.com
15% RS, 75% CM, 10% GV	80	15,000,000	10% growth in all areas	50	William J. Davids, owner/Pres.	billdavids@clarancedavids.com
60% RS, 40% CM	85	14,600,000	10% growth in all areas	25	Morris Newlin, Pres./CEO	N/A
10% RS, 70% CM, 20% GV/other	100	14,500,000	10-12% growth DB	25	James H. Oylen, Pres.	doraland@mindspring
1% RS, 89% CM, 10% GV/other	200+	14,000,000	17% growth CM	13	Bob Bracken, CEO	lewislandscape@aol.com
100% CM	160	13,900,000	8% growth MN; 10% less SR	25	Mark D. McFall, Pres.	imow4u@erols.com
40% RS, 60% CM	235	13,725,000	32% growth D/B/I, MN	28	B. W. Edwards, Pres.	thegreeneryinc@aol.com
20% RS, 60% CM, 20% GV/other	240	12,500,000	20% growth DB, MN	27	Dale Micetic, Pres.	dale@terrainlandscape.com
20% res., 30% CM, 50% GV/other	150	12,180,000	12% growth in all areas	12	Chris Aldarelli, Sr., Pres.	www.aldo1.com
2% RS, 68% CM, 30 GV/other	120	12,000,000	15% growth in CM	28	Robert C. Wilton, Pres.	www.dintar.com, rwilton@dintar.com
90% RS, 10% CM	—	12,000,000	10% growth in all areas	21	Paul Bizon, Pres.	www.prograss.com

## NEWS PICKS

# 10

### What forces are shaping our industry this year? Here's a peak at some people and events that will affect your operations for months to come

BY JASON STAHL / MANAGING EDITOR

#### 1. New EPA administrator



Whitman

Green Industry pros are trying to read new EPA Administrator Christie Whitman. The fairness they're seeking might best be represented

by second-in-command Linda Fischer, formerly of Monsanto, says Tom Delaney, executive vice president of PLCAA.

"In some aspects, I think Fischer might not include herself in decisions on biotechnology," Delaney says, "but she's seen the other side and maybe will be more understanding."

Whitman singled out pesticides early this year by saying, "I think we've done a good job to curb the pesticide program," and Delaney feels the statement hinted at her desire to make as few enemies as possible.

#### 2. Bye-bye Dursban

It wasn't surprising to lawn care professionals when Dow AgroSciences agreed with the EPA to voluntarily cancel Dursban last year. Most had phased it out of their inventories already, but it signaled a bleak future for organophosphates. As Allen James, executive director of RISE, said, "That's nothing to say they'll (the EPA) be more even-handed with other products."

#### 3. Web sites nosedive

Last year, everyone was talking e-com-

merce. Then, tech stocks crashed, and investor money dried up. Web sites like Greenzebras.com lost their funding and were forced to either close shop or find a partner. Word is that e-commerce is still alive, and many entrepreneurs are still convinced there are solid business plans out there.

#### 4. Economic woes?

While many industries are feeling the impact of a slow economy, the Green Industry is not. Most landscape and lawn care businesses are growing revenues at 10 to 20%. But it's still early, and the Green Industry will likely be one of the last to be impacted.

#### 5. Clearing the air

Houston and Galveston, TX-area landscape pros suffered a blow when the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) banned them from using gasoline-powered lawn and garden equipment during morning hours. On a positive note, the leaf-blower bill sponsored by Arizona Rep. Christine Weason was abandoned due to organized industry opposition.

#### 6. John Deere Landscapes

Deere & Company stated last year that its goal was \$6 billion in revenues by 2006. So far, they've shown they meant business. In December, Deere acquired Great Dane. Less than a month later, the company acquired McGinnis Farms, a full-line supplier of nursery stock, landscape supplies and irrigation products through the South-

east. Then, McGinnis Farms' name was changed to John Deere Landscapes, and Richton International Corporation was added to it on May 29, 2001.

#### 7. Pesticides still attacked

Long Island-area commercial pesticide applicators gained a small victory when a judge in Nassau County, NY overturned the neighbor notification law.

Despite negotiations with ACPA and RISE, Sen. Torricelli (D-NJ) submitted his pesticides-



Torricelli

in-schools amendment to S. 1, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Authorization. The legislation, introduced

in the House by Rep. Holt (D-NJ) as the School Environment Protection Act of 2001, would eliminate the use of pesticides not deemed "least toxic" at schools within six years.

#### 8. ServiceMaster struggles

ServiceMaster's revenues went up for 2000, but profits were less than 1999. Net income from its largest business segment, the reorganized and unified TruGreen Group, was well below planned levels due to what the company said was the "assimilation and integration of our TruGreen landscape business." Talk about a management headache. Integrating more than 100 different companies has been more than a chal-

lenge at ServiceMaster; it's been a costly one. Now, the company's focus is not on buying up companies but running those operations well and increasing profit.

#### 9. Mergers & acquisitions

On the chemical side, AstraZeneca PLC and Novartis AG made a big splash by merging and spinning off into a separately traded concern named Syngenta. So did BASF when it bought American Cyanamid. TruGreen-Landcare bought the \$22 million Leisure Lawn. But everyone saw how dangerous consolidation could be when AgriBioTech went bankrupt and was forced to sell off all the businesses it had acquired just a few years earlier. Watch for a few more big ones on the chemical and equipment side this year.

#### 10. Water issues

When the Water Quality Act was created in 1998, all nurseries and greenhouses were required to have nutrient management plans. Now, as the act makes its way to the state level for implementation, it's hitting home on our industry.

"Water issues are going to add costs to everyone's bottom line," says Fred Langley, Manager of State Government Relations for RISE. "As we go forward, this industry will have to look at any place that discharges material that could impact water quality."

# LM100

WHERE ARE THEY NOW

INFLUENTIAL

10

## Where are they now?

**They led our industry in its formative years, then moved on. What are they doing today?**

BY RON HALL

### **Richard Ackerman** **Built Northwest Landscape**

Richard Ackerman ran one of the largest landscape companies in the Pacific Northwest's, but he's back in school now. He loves it. Three years after leaving landscaping, Ackerman serves on the Lake Oswego (OR) School Board, coaches the offensive line on the school's football team and spends a lot of time with family, community and local youth. "After 26 years in business, I thought it was time I started giving a lot back," says Ackerman. Business interests? "I'm doing some real estate developing with some of our former clients, but not much," he says.

### **Bob Parmley** **Former PLCAA president**

After Bob Parmley's served as president of PLCAA in 1989, he left his 18-year lawn care career to run equipment maker Savage Bros., Elk Grove Village, IL. Actually, he and a partner had purchased the company 12 years earlier, mostly to acquire its machining tools. But they saw continued demand for its equipment, and Parmley switched careers.

### **Elliot Roberts, Ph.D.,** **Directed the Lawn Institute**

From 1982-1991, Dr. Elliot Roberts, headed the non-profit Lawn Institute, and provided the U.S. media with a steady stream of accurate information about turf's benefits. He and his wife, Beverly, just celebrated their 50 wedding anniversary. Besides raising



**Elliot Roberts**

a few head of cattle and restoring some of the woodlands on the family property, Roberts, a soil scientist by training, does some public speaking on the topic of evolution, which he says he's rethinking

### **Rod Bailey** **Ran Evergreen Services**

In 1968 Rod Bailey was a management consultant, and one of his clients was a landscape company. In 1970, he and a partner bought that Seattle-area company, Evergreen Services. In Dec.



**Rod Bailey**

1998 he sold it to TruGreen. Today, his Alder Springs Enterprises business management firm helps other landscapers build their organizations. "I don't feel like I've left the business because I work with clients in the industry," says Bailey.

### **Jerome "Jerry" Faulring** **PLCAA's first president**

Jerry Faulring's Hydro Lawn application company expanded to Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York in the 1980s. In 1996, he sold his business and returned to the land. He runs 200-acre Waverly Farm in Adamston, MD, which grows landscape-ready ornamentals.



**Jerry Faulring**

"I've really enjoyed it," says Faulring. "This is definitely a long-term investment. You put \$10 in the ground and you wait five or 10 years before you get anything back."

### **J. Martin Erbaugh** **Ran multi-state operation**

J. Martin "Marty" Erbaugh's entrepreneurial spirit still burns bright. He Lawnmark, a strong regional lawn care company, in 1995, and today manages J.M. Erbaugh Co., an investment company. He also founded and helps direct H2Cool, a Chicago-based company that delivers bottled water. "I miss the lawn business and I still follow the success of some of the former Lawnmark people," he says.

### **Paul D. Schnare, Ph.D.** **PLCAA founding member**

Paul D. Schnare, Ph.D., one of PLCAA's founding members in 1979. Paul sold Accugrow Lawn Care to his employees in 1998. He served for two years as an assistant professor of agriculture at Southeast Missouri University, and he and his wife now operate Sunny Hill Garden & Florists, Cape Girardeau, MO.

### **Patrick J. Norton** **Guided Barefoot Grass**

Patrick J. Norton grew Barefoot Grass into the second largest lawn care company, serving half a million cus-

tomers in over 100 markets. Barefoot was purchased by TruGreen in 1997. In June 2000, Norton was named Executive Vice President CFO of The Scotts Company, Marysville, OH.

### **James R. Brooks** **Executive VP PLCAA 1983-90**

Jim Brooks brings his acting skills to the Centerstage North amateur theatre



**James Brooks**

group in Marietta, GA. Brooks claims to be "temporarily retired," but besides theater, he is also president of his community swim & tennis club. Brooks is a founding and board member of the Evergreen Foundation.

### **Bruce Wilson** **30 years with ECI**

Bruce Wilson left landscape giant Environmental Care, Inc., and entered the Internet business world. He was



**Bruce Wilson**

a key player in GreenZebras, an internet site formed last year. It merged with Green2go, just this spring.

"We're back on track now and we're going to be one of the survivors," says Wilson of the b2b supplier to the Green Industry. "It's been a refreshing change and a good experience having to do something entirely different, but a lot of work."

# LM100

TOUGH LANDSCAPES TO MAINTAIN

## TOUGHEST 10

### Think you have problems? Check out these 10 very challenging landscapes that require the professional touch

BY GEORGE WITTERSCHEIN

#### Graceland Mansion, Memphis, TN

The biggest challenge at Graceland Mansion, Memphis, TN, is its 650,000 annual visitors.

"My crew starts blowing driveways and pathways and checking the gravesite at 7 a.m.," says maintenance manager Jimmy Gambill.

"Our work is dictated by the climate. Last summer, we had consistent temperatures in the 90-to-100-degree range with little rain. We have no sprinkler system (Elvis installed a lot of TV and security wires and cables — a major barrier to installing an irrigation system), so we do all watering by hand."



Graceland

#### Utah State University's Logan Campus

Standards are high at Utah State University in Logan, in part because of a top-notch landscape architecture department on campus. The campus is also part of the state arboretum.

Local conditions also make things challenging. It's not necessarily warm in May in Utah, but the campus expects flowers in bloom for early May graduation. Ellen Newell and her staff use the winter months to get as ready as possible, and plant pansies and other flowers that should bloom in time for the event. To address water restrictions,

Newell installed a Maxicom satellite system for more efficient water use.

#### Overpeck Park, Bergen County, NJ

Todd Cochran, regional director of the Professional Grounds Manage-



Overpeck Park

ment Society (PGMS), is the assistant superintendent of parks for Bergen County, NJ. The challenge there is environmental: much-visited Overpeck County Park is built on a reclaimed landfill. "Every few feet, the soil type may be different," Cochran explains. It also sits at the edge of a protected wetlands that is the source of salt water infiltration and debris.

Other challenges? The ground settles often, making sinkholes that General Supervisor Mike Gallucci and his crews must keep refilling. A constant wind dries things up, and methane gas from garbage buried in the landfill hurts trees. The park also adjoins the New Jersey Turn-

pike, one of the most traveled highways in the world...and one of the biggest litter producers.

#### Villanova University, Philadelphia, PA

As campus Superintendent of Grounds, Kevin O'Donnell has a classic task at Villanova University: keeping a large, semi-urban academic landscape beautiful despite substantial foot traffic and public events drawing large crowds.

O'Donnell and his crew of 16 grounds employees have a clear strategy for the 150-year-old campus designated as an arboretum: "Take care of the basics first," O'Donnell says. "Keeping litter off the ground helps maintain a pleasant atmosphere and the beauty of the landscape. We think today's effort results in less litter being deposited in the future because, when an area is clean, people tend to leave it clean and respect it."

#### Groundmasters, Cincinnati, OH

For Mike Rorie, president of Groundmasters, it's not the landscape that's challenging but the

*continued on page 34*



# LM100

TOUGH LANDSCAPES TO MAINTAIN

continued from page 32

client. Groundmasters has a specialty in homeowners' associations (HOAs), and the typical client is a board of volunteers, none of whom are landscape professionals. "They are under tremendous budgetary pressure from their fellow homeowners, creating an intense focus on price," Rorie says. "Plus, as



Groundmasters' headquarters

soon as an individual develops expertise in landscaping, he or she is replaced by someone else and we start the learning process all over again.

The best way to deal with this, Rorie says, is to "know the players and educate them about the details of the agreement and the recent history of the community's landscaping."

## Hilton Grand Vacation Club, Orlando, FL

Adam Koenigsknecht is an account manager with Environmental Care Industries, Orlando, FL, where his responsibility includes



Hilton Grand Vacation Club

the Hilton Grand Vacation Club, a high-end time-share with a strong appetite for attractive landscaping. It's a large property with 13 units containing timeshares, plus the clubhouse and a sales center. A multi-year drought, however, has made his job a lot harder.

"Florida irrigation systems were installed to supplement rainfall water, not replace it," Koenigsknecht says. "Without rain, the dropping groundwater causes problems with pumps, coverage pressure and everything else having to do with irrigation."

The key to success is an educated client. "As the account manager, I'm constantly keeping the client aware of the changing water restrictions and ways to deal with them. It's time-consuming, but it's my job."

## Busch Gardens, Tampa, FL

Ron Schmoyer is president of OneSource Landscape and Golf Services, Tampa, FL, which maintains both Busch Gardens theme parks (Williamsburg, VA and Tampa Bay). The Florida theme park is the most challenging because of the state's drought and its year-round operation.

"We have hundreds of pots and baskets of annuals to keep watered. The restrictions come from a local water management board and change from time to time as the drought conditions vary," Schmoyer says.

Another challenge is fixing the damage caused by guests who Busch Gardens believes should have a "hands-on experience"



Busch Gardens

with the landscape. Landscape features are not barricaded and fenced off, which means the crew has to replace many flowers.

## The Grand Casino, Tunica, MS

The Grand Casino, Tunica, MS, lists landscape maintenance challenges that are built into the soil and water itself, according to project manager Scott Brewer and director Rod Rotolo, both of whom work for Jack's Landscape in Mississippi, a subsidiary of Randall and Blake, Littleton, CO.

The property and landscape is designed around a sizable barge casino. The resort's parent company, Park Place Entertainment, demands that the property look first



The Grand Casino

class. That, however, isn't easy. "We're situated in the Mississippi Delta on land that has different soil types with pH levels that have to be adjusted," Brewer says. "Also, our service road is a seven-mile and 4 to 5-lane 'highway' that requires a lot of landscape maintenance."

## City Place, West Palm Beach, FL

Rick Leal, vice president of Vila and Son Landscaping Inc., Miami, takes care of City Place in West Palm Beach, a retail/residential complex in the city's downtown area.

The demands are similar to Graceland's: "Watering the pots and keeping the flower beds intact is a challenge given the several thousand people who walk through every day," Leal says. "Because the aesthetic standards are high, we have to get the place looking good by morning when the stores open for business."

## Universal Studios, Orlando, FL

The most formal landscapes at Universal Studios Orlando are at the entrances. The Resort Garden Walkway has no hours of operation, so guests come and go at all hours. Employees must be out of



Universal Studios

guest view by 7 a.m. every morning and stay out of view until 2 a.m., 365 days a year.

Rainfall is another big problem. Some years, it's 30 inches. Others, it's seven inches. This keeps some of the 100 employees running around adjusting irrigation computers and programs all the time.