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Circle 105
Ever wondered about the life of a professional power carver? Editor in Chief Ron Hall gets up close and personal with competitor Luke Harris, shown here, at the Echo Inc.-sponsored first-ever Professional Carving Series Championship, held last month at the outdoor power equipment EXPO in Louisville, KY.

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Contributors

WHO'S WHO IN LM

Dr. Steven Cohan is fired up about the Professional Development Academy, an exciting new program that builds confidence and leadership skills in new hires. Cohan coordinates the landscape management and internship programs at the University of Maryland, site of the 2005 PLANET Career Days. We can't do justice to Dr. Cohan's many achievements in both the private sector and academia so we'll drop back and punt and tell you that he's a pretty fair tennis player and that he and his wife, Diane, have two sons and one grandson who they adore. Turn to page 32 to learn more about getting your young managers pumped up about being leaders.

Peter Fretty spent 15 years in automotive manufacturing before joining the Nobel profession of journalism. Peter travels the country following fascinating projects and discoveries. In addition to reporting for Landscape Management, Fretty writes for an array of trade, consumer and in-flight magazines. The Press Club of Dallas recently named him as a finalist for the 47th annual Katie Awards for top magazine feature article. Having worked for a family business for 10 years and going through the process himself, he brings a fine perspective to the topic of business succession starting on page 26.

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Baltimore, MD 21230
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Desperate yet?

BY STEPHANIE RICCA / Managing Editor

Beautiful lawns, spacious homes, happy families. These are the hallmarks of suburbia." So began a recent episode of that addicting Sunday night soap, "Desperate Housewives." Do you watch it? Come on, admit it. You've seen it at least once.

Men tend to tune in for a glimpse of Teri Hatcher's character Susan and women don't mind the hunky lawnmowing boy, John.

What an entrepreneur. This kid doesn't drive a fancy van or sport a company logo on his shirt (probably because he'd have to wear a shirt to do that, which he doesn't). But wow, does he make out. Literally with Gabrielle, one of the desperate housewives, every time he comes to mow her lawn, which he does just about every day. Talk about a contract.

Actually, whether it's Shirtless John or a more professional fictitious landscaper, whoever has the corner on the Wisteria Lane market must be doing well: Every single lawn is lush, green and perfect in every way.

Somehow the Wisteria Lane Homeowner's Association has managed to weed out all the nutty neighbors who think 6-in. crabgrass is "fine just because it's green," or who believe that a few rusty cars up on cement blocks in the yard substitute for a lawn.

This is such a flawless suburban greenscape, there's not even a garden gnome or chrome gazing ball in sight. No, in fact, I think this is a street full of those homeowners who hand-water their lawns under cover of darkness just to sidestep summer water restrictions.

This neighborhood has a commitment to quality landscaping and lawn care. Take Carlos, Gabrielle's husband. In one episode he got down on his knees to inspect the cut length of his newly mown grass. Of course, the grass hadn't been cut at all since the aforementioned Shirtless John just had the mower parked out front while he was inside with Gabrielle.

But revenge is sweet on Wisteria Lane. Just a few weeks ago, Gabrielle discovered her former flame and lawnmowing boy setting up a similar "contract" with another neighborhood woman. In revenge, she picked up John's trimmer and destroyed this woman's hedges while they were inside, ahem, signing the contract.

Clearly Shirtless John has a problem securing his equipment. He should have locked that trimmer up in his trailer. Except he doesn't have a trailer. It must be where he left his shirt.

So yes the landscapes are perfect, but like everything else about the show, perfect exteriors give way to crumbling interiors. So next time you watch, pay attention to the grass. There's got to be a few white grubs out there, just waiting to strike. But don't expect Shirtless John to come to the rescue. I hear he's getting killed off.

Contact Stephanie at 440/891-2623 or e-mail sricca@questex.com.
If you concentrate most of your business in a single segment, sooner or later you will feel the brunt of hard times.

Build a good customer mix

BY BRUCE WILSON

Many companies believe that homeowners association (HOA) work isn’t good work. Some companies say that the best market segment is high-end office. Others focus on getting public work. Yet I work with many companies that do HOA work and make a nice profit at it.

My belief is that a diversified client portfolio is best. There are several reasons for this.

If you concentrate most of your business in a single segment, sooner or later you will feel the brunt of hard times for that segment. There have been several times in my career that the high-end office market became overbuilt, recession hit and maintenance prices in that segment took a big hit. Apartments have gone through their cycles as well. Public work goes through outsourcing and self-performing cycles.

Another less-obvious problem with concentrating too much work in a single segment is that a company may inadvertently become too dependent on a single customer. I have seen this happen to companies when two or more property management companies that they had business with merged. Suddenly half of their business was with one customer. This is not a good thing.

To me a good market mix is to be in multiple market segments. There are some challenges in that the needs of each segment vary slightly, but not enough to be an impenetrable barrier. I would prefer that no one segment be more than 50% of a portfolio of a business.

It becomes somewhat of a challenge to get into some segments because clients want references of similar accounts. But if you have good references overall, your price is competitive and you sell yourself well, you can overcome that rather easily with most prospective customers.

When looking at new segments of the market, take into consideration the pros and cons of each type of work. Is there high or low potential for enhancement work? Does the customer, as in the case of public work, look primarily at low bids? How about the ability to maintain long-term business relationships? How do the customer’s needs line up with your own company culture in terms of being able to meet the customer’s expectations? These are important questions to consider as you plan to diversify.

— The author is a partner with Tom Oyler in the Wilson-Oyler Group, which offers consulting services. He is also the director of the Symbiot Landscape Network. Visit www.wilson-oyler.com.
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EXPO ‘05 rocked L’ville

BY RON HALL / Editor-in-Chief

LOUISVILLE, KY — Perfect October weather blessed the ’05 International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment EXPO, where the biggest attraction is a 20-acre outside demo area where you can try out the equipment. By the end of the 2 1/2-day EXPO the 17,487 visitors (706 from other countries) had beaten the grounds outside of the renovated Kentucky Exposition Center into dust. (Of course, vendors put all right again after the last mower was tucked onto a trailer and the last backhoe powered down.)

Nice growth in ’05

Attendance at the outdoor power extravaganza grew by 7%, compared to 2004, reflecting a 5% increase in dealers/retailers and a 14% increase in lawn and landscape professionals, reported the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI).

More than 5,000 supplier personnel greeted attendees and promoted an incredible variety of power equipment. Included in this year’s mix were more than 50 products in the New Products and Innovations Showroom.

This year saw a nice uptick in the number of people taking advantage of educational seminars. Most remarkable were the 100 or so attendees, almost all of them men, who spent their Saturday afternoon listening to landscape presentations — and this during one of the biggest college football games of the season, USC vs. Notre Dame.

Apart from the weather, the mix of vendors and the growing variety and quality of educational sessions, were some of EXPO’s highlights.

Don’t forget the bands. Briggs & Stratton’s corporate band opened for legendary rockers Paul Revere and the Raiders. The next evening, Ariens, to kick off next season’s 90th anniversary for its Gravely brand, sponsored a kick-butt performance by country rockers the Charlie Daniels band.

EXPO rocks back into Louisville next year for an Oct. 6-8 run.
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In the Know

Canadian pros make great idea even better

OTTAWA, CANADA — Landcare professionals here took a popular U.S. public service project and made it their own. And they hope to take it national in '06.

In late October about 50 landscape and lawn care pros gathered at Beechwood Cemetery, a historic cemetery overlooking Parliament Hill here, and improved the grounds of a portion of the 160-cemetery.

Borrowing from the annual Remembrance and Renewal project at Arlington National and Old Congressional Cemeteries in Washington, D.C., the Canadian Green Industry pros concentrated their efforts on about 10 acres set aside for the country's veterans. The worked hard that day to make that particular portion of the cemetery attractive for Remembrance Day, Nov. 11; the day Canada honors its veterans.

Chris Lemcke, technical coordinator, Weed Man USA, estimates the small group donated somewhere between $15,000-$20,000 in services and product. "It was a start," he said. Lemcke and Sharon Urquhart, Green Unlimited, organized this first event.

Companies like Bayer, Plant Products, Scotts, Ritches and NuGrow contributed products while Tim Hortons, a popular restaurant chain, offered up coffee and donuts. Business owners and employees of local landscape, lawn care and tree care companies provided the technical expertise and labor.

"I think we came in and offered the help at the right time," said Lemcke, explaining that caretakers of the particular section of the cemetery that the group improved have a limited grounds budget.

Unlike the United States, Canada does not have a "national" cemetery dedicated to its veterans. Instead there are special sections within cemeteries across that vast country.

"What we're hoping is that this becomes a national event and that people in our industry get involved in similar projects in their local communities," Lemcke said. "There is beauty in these cemeteries, in nature, and certainly we enhance that."
IA names 2005 award winners

FALLS CHURCH, VA — The Irrigation Association named the winners for its 2005 awards program, honoring those people, places and organizations that have taken an industry-leading role in irrigation and water conservation.

This year's winners include:

- The Eugene Water & Electric Board of Eugene, OR, has been named the 2005 Irrigation Association Partner of the Year for its conservation efforts and for providing a model for cooperation between the irrigation industry and water agencies.

- The town of Cary, NC, recognized for its progressive water conservation program, has been named recipient of the 2005 Irrigation Association National Water and Energy Conservation Award.

- Ronald Gilbert, who introduced the concept of pressurized irrigation around the world, is the 2005 recipient of the Irrigation Association Crawford Reid Memorial Award.

- Jim Barrett, recognized as an innovator in golf course irrigation design, has been named recipient of the 2005 Irrigation Association Industry Achievement Award.

- Claude J. Phene, whose research shaped the evolution of drip irrigation technology, has been named Irrigation Association Person of the Year for 2005.

- John Replogle, whose research led to new methods for measuring water flow, has been named the Irrigation Association 2005 Person of the Year.

COMPASS correction

The COMPASS System is not a software program as reported in the October issue of LM. COMPASS is a comprehensive business management system that teaches landscape/lawn service professionals how to “track time, not dollars,” and to understand their true labor costs and overhead. Business owners protect and track net profit by using the system. It also gives owners systems to retain employees and to make their operations and office procedures more efficient. For more information about the COMPASS System call 302/324-1614 or e-mail info@compasssystem.com.
In the Know

Canada pesticide debate rages on

BY RON HALL / Editor-in-Chief

OTTAWA, CANADA — Lawmakers here on Oct. 26 voted 10-10 on a bylaw to ban the "cosmetic use" of pesticides beginning in 2007. The split disappointed both the activist and lawn care communities. Anti-pesticide activists want a ban. Landcare professionals seek clear-cut and reasonable guidelines for maintaining clients' lawns.

The councilors agreed to re-examine the issue in mid November.

At the heart of the controversy is the concept of "cosmetic use," defined as the non-essential use of chemical pesticides for "purely aesthetic reasons" to enhance the appearance of property.

Less than a week before the Oct. 26 vote, the city's Health, Recreation and Social Services Committee listened to more than 120 presentations and debate over two days. Then it voted 6-2 in favor of the bylaw. On Oct. 26, the day the vote came before the councilors, supporters of the bylaw arrived at City Hall with placards and megaphones in hand.

Thom Bourne of the lawn care company Nutrilawn, who has actively participated in the bylaw discussions, received a chorus of boos when he arrived. It wasn't the first time Bourne drew the ire of the anti-pesticide group, or the councilors supporting the bylaw. In a previous hearing Bourne presented the councilors with more than 4,000 letters from lawn care customers opposing the bylaw.

Bourne said that most lawn care business owners are not opposed to a bylaw as long as it is reasonable. "We want a workable bylaw, not a prohibition. We want something that provides sensible guidelines."

As the bylaw is written, pesticides can still be sold in Ottawa, but not used.

The debate over pesticide use in Ottawa took on much of its present form in 2002 when the city council adopted a three-year strategy to encourage residents to voluntarily reduce pesticide use. The goal at that time was a 70% reduction on residential properties by 2005 and a 100% reduction at schools, hospitals, daycare centers and nursing homes.

To date, more than 70 Canadian cities have passed legislation to either severely restrict or phase out pesticide use. Almost all of this activity has occurred since the Supreme Court of Canada in 2001 ruled that Hudson (pop. 5,000) in Quebec Province, could regulate "the non-essential" use of pesticides. Most recently, Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, began considering pesticide legislation.

Visit www.landscapemanagement.net for updates.
New leadership for Bayer, LESCO

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK/CLEVELAND — Two industry-leading companies recently experienced changes in their top management teams.

At Bayer Environmental Science, Research Triangle Park, NC, Neil Cleveland was named director of the U.S. Green Business. Cleveland will assume his new position on April 1, 2006, taking over for Dan Carrothers, who resigns effective Dec. 31 to become chief operating officer of Datacore, a database marketing firm in Kansas City, KS.

Josh Weeks, vice president, Professional Products North America, will assume management of Bayer’s Green Business on an interim basis from Jan. 1 through March 31, 2006. He will work closely with Cleveland, who holds the position of global portfolio manager of Green Business, based at the global headquarters for Bayer Environmental Science in Lyon, France.

Jeffrey L. Rutherford replaces Michael P. DiMino as president and CEO of LESCO.

“We expect this to be a smooth transition, as Neil is very familiar with both our industry and our customers,” said Weeks. “He has successfully held many positions within Bayer, including sales, product management and sales management, in addition to his current global responsibilities.”

Likewise, Cleveland-based LESCO named Jeffrey L. Rutherford president and CEO, replacing Michael P. DiMino, who resigned both positions as well as his directorship effective Oct. 20. Rutherford was previously senior vice president and CFO.

The company rounded out its senior management team, promoting Bruce Weisbarth to chief financial officer and controller and Kathleen Minahan to general counsel and secretary.

“I would like to thank Michael DiMino for his contributions to LESCO over the past four years,” said J. Martin Erbaugh, LESCO chairman of the board. “With the sale of our supply chain assets, these management changes put the right team in place to drive our store-focused strategy.”

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People & companies

Professional irrigation equipment manufacturer K-Rain Manufacturing Corp. appointed Christopher (Ren) Zhong as regional sales representative for China.

Textron Inc. named Daniel F. Wilkinson president of Jacobsen, the Charlotte, NC-based manufacturer of golf and sports turf, commercial grounds care, turfgrass production, and large estate lawn care equipment. He replaces Jon Carlson, who left Jacobsen to pursue other opportunities.

Crystal Marmo joined Sanford, FL-based Girard Environmental Services as director of human resources. Jared Bonsbire, a graduate of the University of Kentucky, also comes to GES as an estimator of construction services.

The Toro Co., Irrigation Division, hired Brian Ries as marketing and product manager of valve and control products for the residential and commercial landscape markets.

Andy Smith, a Michigan irrigation contractor, has been named director of state and affiliate relations for the Irrigation Association. Smith is president of Smith Irrigation Inc., but plans to sell the company to focus on his new duties with the IA.

Gro-Pro LLC of Inverness, FL, hired Greg Thompson as director of National Accounts. Thompson has 10 years experience in the non-crop markets working with American Cyanamid and BASF.

Ferris Industries of Munnsville, NY, promoted Dan Dean (above, left) to regional sales manager for the Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri markets. Jim Lawton (above, right), regional sales manager for the Southwest region.

Chemilizer Products, Inc., a manufacturer of quality fluid injectors in Largo, FL, has named Shelly Remmel operations manager and Wilma Pennino inventory control manager.
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Consider business protocol and family dynamics to make a smooth transition from one generation to the next.

Will they or won't they? Go into the family business, that is. Young children who grow up in the industry often gravitate to the shiny trucks and tools, giving their eager entrepreneur parents hope that an interest is brewing to carry on the family business. But Gordon Lohman, founder of the Montague, MI-based Double L Enterprises, warns against reading too far into that childhood curiosity.

"Anyone who starts a business has dreams of their children carrying it forward, but it is important to realize that everyone has their own niche," Lohman says. "If they have an interest, you want to be there..."
to support them, but at no point do you want to force anyone into a role where they may not be comfortable."

In his case, his sons Kyle, Kevin and Jeff did choose to enter the business their father started, but via different routes that led them eventually back to the family enterprise.

For most business owners like Gordon Lohman, the prospect of succession, even if family is involved, is daunting. You have worked hard and are ready to move on and enjoy the life you've built, but an important question remains: Are you and your business prepared for the transition, especially considering how difficult it can be to

### Family ties

While it may be difficult for any entrepreneur to let go of his business, the complexity only increases when the successor is a family member.

"Family members bring their own set of dynamics into the equation, which is why being able to separate out family dynamics and maintain the relationships is so important," says Frank Merritt, president of the Atlanta-based Corporate Psychology Resources. "You want to keep the family aspect separate from the performance and business judgment component. Once you transfer family difficulties into the workplace you have difficulty sorting anything out."

Merritt adds that it is usually most effective for the next generation to go out and work other places immediately out of school rather than come directly into the business. "This creates a confidence level apart from the family, which is very important because there is a perception externally and sometimes internally that they have been taken care of by the patriarch or matriarch," he says.

Montague, MI-based Double L Enterprises principal Kyle Lohman agrees that it is important that children work outside the business before taking on roles within the business. "This way they know how other businesses work and it is possible to avoid individuals placing themselves into roles where they are not best suited," he says. "In our business, when the kids come in they will also go through each department and see what it is like before they take on any role."

Kyle Lohman knew the business would be a good fit for him from the start, back in high school, while his brothers took different routes. Kyle and Jeff purchased the business from their father in 1997. Kevin joined as a partner in 2003 after military obligations overseas. "Kyle came down to visit me in Texas and started talking about his plans and it was at that point that I knew I wanted to get involved," Kevin says. "With a degree in business management, and having worked for a few other businesses, I had knowledge of how to run an efficient business and looked forward to apply those principals to practice."

Jeff combined his love of the outdoors component of landscaping with a strong interest in building customer service. "Once I had the opportunity to start interacting with customers, along with the immediate satisfaction of seeing a job through to completion, I knew it was the right fit," he says. "I just adjusted to the business day by day. Fortunately, we have made a solid team and continue to complement one another with differing sets of strengths.

According to Merritt, this type of comprehensive approach is especially important when multiple family members have an interest in taking over the reins. "Often times it makes sense to install the child that is most suited to running the business and treat the other children as passive investors or as individuals taken care of financially or estate-wise by the business," he says. "It is tough enough to manage normal family relationships — trying to do so in a business environment can ruin both the business and the family." — P.F.
let go and allow someone else to take the reins?

Unfortunately for most business owners, this is one of the most feared times in the growth cycle, so most tend to avoid the topic entirely. According to Frank Merritt, president of Atlanta-based Corporate Psychology Resources, this is a relatively common issue regardless of the type of business structure or the size.

Jayme Broudy, founder and principal of Pinnacle Consulting Group, agrees, adding that an owner’s immersion in the business usually becomes the biggest challenge to overcome. “As a result, they have a hard time separating themselves from the business even though they know deep down that it is time to move on,” Broudy says. “Often it is the small things that trip up the process as much as the major issues.”

According to Broudy, owners must prepare themselves both mentally and physically so that it is possible to work through smaller steps of the transaction rather than experience an overwhelming shock. “Many owners want to work full force, full time and then draw the line in the sand and have someone else take over,” she says. “However, the best-case scenario, while sometimes difficult, is a gradual transition from owner to owner.”

Consider the components

Plan ahead — Even though the light at the end of the tunnel may seem far away, it is never too early to put a succession plan in place. “Doing so can mean avoiding a great deal of financial risk, especially if one of the owners dies,” Merritt says. “If it helps put things in perspective, the succession plan can actually be more of a contingency plan until the owner begins to get older. You need to set the seeds for plans that will come to fruition many years down the road.”

Through advance planning, it continued on page 30
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was much easier for Kyle Lohman and his brothers Jeff and Kevin to purchase Double L Enterprises from their father Gordon, who founded the landscaping business in 1986. “The earlier you can get a jump on the process the better,” Kyle says. “You want the experience to be as pleasant as possible and the more time there is to discuss the transition and work out details, the smoother the actual transaction will be.”

It is also important to create a long-term plan a minimum of five years before you hope to get out, Lohman explains. “A lot of people get to the point where they want just to sell out and move on. If the plan is not in place, this can create confusion and when family is involved there can also be hurt feelings.”

Document details — While some proactive businesses do have plans in place, unfortunately having a formal written plan is still relatively rare. Lohman adds that through documentation, family businesses have the opportunity to assess the successor’s abilities and the business operation’s needs, while downplaying the feelings component.

“Documentation eliminates any question of responsibilities or duties. It also provides a process whereby everyone involved can come to full agreement in advance,” Lohman says. “Some view written documents as overkill or a cold way of handling business, but they really can be the tool that protects the business, which in turn protects all of the families relying on its success.”

Remember the outside world — Business owners tend to get caught up in the day-to-day operations of the business, especially during transition. However, Merritt explains that it is crucial that business owners remember the value of those outside the business. “For instance, you need to get objective third parties involved so that you can steer the education and skill development of the successor,” he says.

Lohman agrees, adding that people who have gone through the process bring a different perspective to the situation. “As a result they can shed light on potential problems or situations that could arise, and it is much better to cover all of the bases in advance,” he says. “It also provides a fresh set of eyes and a due diligence checklist that helps avoid any of the problems associated with family issues.”

Another component of remembering the outside world deals with transitioning the firm’s various contacts, Lohman adds. “Our father had a number of people that he dealt with including customers, subcontractors and suppliers, so it was vital to ongoing operations that they knew us and were comfortable dealing with us prior to the time that he was planning to exit the company,” he says.

Step back — For owners who have just handed over the keys, Merritt advises them to take breathing room. “You need to truly empower and avoid second-guessing. Many times the strains come when you need to hand over power,” he says. “You need to let the individual stumble, have difficulties and learn. You cannot micromanage if your goal is to transition out. You want them to be successful, especially since these arrangements typically have long-term incentives or payoffs.”

Giving successors empowerment throughout the transition is vital, Lohman explains. “For instance, there were times when we wanted to incorporate new methods and technologies into the business that our father had not planned on,” he says. “Sometimes he knew they were mistakes, but he did not stop us because he wanted us to learn firsthand from the experience. Not only does this help you better learn the operations, it also helps keep the relationship moving positively.”

— The author is a freelance writer in Whitehall, MI. Contact him at peterfretty@msn.com.
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LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Making the critical TRANSITION

New Professional Development Academy bridges the gap between academic training and on-the-job leadership experience

BY STEVEN COHAN, PH.D.

Seniors in my business management class say their biggest apprehension about entering the working environment is: “We don’t know whether we can meet our employers’ expectations.” Colleagues tell me their students have the same concern.

With this in mind, we developed the Professional Development Academy (PDA) for developing leadership skills. This two-day workshop engages entry-level management personnel with leadership skills through interactive role-playing, problem solving and implementation of a landscape project.

The PDA got off the ground at a PLANET Summer Leadership meeting this past July when a pilot workshop was agreed upon. Dr. Phil Allen of Brigham Young University conducted the first PDA workshop with 50 of his landscape management students.

We felt the integration of academic faculty and the industry training expertise of Jim Paluch of JP Horizons would help transition landscape management graduates from academia to industry. The faculty served as mentors and facilitators while Paluch involved the participants in a series of leadership skills. Participating faculty at the BYU PDA workshop included: Martha Hill, Hinds Community College; Randey Wall, Illinois Central Community College; Steve O’Neal and Dick Ansley, Columbus State Community College; Dan Steams, Pennsylvania State University; Phil Allen and Greg Jolley, Brigham Young University; and myself, Steve Cohan, representing the

continued on page 34
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Participants say PDA hit the mark

The PDA weekend was amazing,” says Susana Pena, a BYU horticulture major who will graduate in 2006. “Deep down everyone knows that people skills are important, and that they don’t really get addressed in the formal education process. Students are taught the science behind horticulture, but that isn’t enough. Students need to be taught leadership skills as well. But from what I’ve heard and seen so far, too many landscape workers have trouble communicating. If you can’t communicate, then you can’t lead.”

Roel Ventura graduated from BYU in 2004 with a degree in urban horticulture and now works in sales as a concierge for Initial Tropical Plants in Los Angeles.

Responsible for serving about 80 clients, in his short career he has already recognized a need for the kinds of people skills presented at PDA. “Being effective in this industry requires a lot of energy,” Ventura says. “And PDA showed us how to build positive energy. Paluch’s demonstrations were energizing, but at the same time they were extremely practical. I see a need for leadership training and how to manage people. The ‘Builder and Destroyer’ demonstration mirrored exactly what happens in the real world.”

Among the faculty, Dr. Phil Allen’s comments echo those of colleagues: “We want our graduates, and graduates across the country who are pursuing landscape management degrees to be effective at communicating and supervising people,” he says. “This PDA workshop is a part of a much larger ongoing effort. Students need to recognize they have to think about working effectively with others and becoming leaders before they graduate.” — S.C.
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Are you a builder or destroyer?

BY JIM PALUCH

Getting everyone in an organization to understand the “Builder and Destroyer” mentality is critical. We see so many destroyers. They show up every day at their companies and begin prophesying the worst. They make it their full-time work creating a grim environment. But with this awareness we are also seeing more and more builders out there who can bring people together to work out the complications that arise on the job.

One thing the Professional Development Academy does is show entry-level managers how to work with people and understand themselves. That’s quite an advantage to the young person beginning his or her career and quite an advantage to the company that hires them.

Leaders who want to make a positive difference create an environment where people want to be. These are the companies that succeed, largely because they value their people. But building this kind of culture doesn’t happen overnight. It often takes training to be able to communicate from a Builder’s frame of reference. That’s where PDA comes in for the young professional entering the working world.

Learning how to handle routine issues such as chronically late employees or workers who refuse to wear their uniforms may not seem like issues that colleges should teach, but nonetheless these are the matters that newly hired landscape supervisors have to deal with.

It’s better to take a few days of company time and train workers on how to get along with people in this industry than it is to simply continue reacting to stressful situations, often with lackluster results.

— The author, through JP Horizons, offers leadership and sales training to the Green Industry. Contact him at Jim@jphorizons.com.

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head of BYU grounds, briefed them on the installation of 17,000 sq. ft. of sod at the location of a 2006 Student Career Days event. Working with BYU’s landscape production standards, they coordinated their efforts with adjacent crews. Not everything went smoothly, at least not initially. But as the three-hour project progressed, leaders emerged and teamwork improved.

The participants then broke into groups of ten students, each with a faculty member, to brainstorm how their presence, as an entry-level manager, could create a positive impact on their respective companies.

Each group generated 20 ideas on subjects ranging from improving a company’s market nice to job cost controls. Then each selected its best idea and presented it to the others in a short skit.

Paluch wrapped up the event with a participatory exercise on the risks and rewards of change. The enthusiasm of both the emerging leaders and those who had recently entered the industry grew throughout the event and endorsed the PDA leadership development concept, all agreed.

Student feedback inspired the faculty and Paluch to begin planning regional PDA workshops at other venues. These workshops would be available for companies to send their new college recruits and current entry-level managers.

Challenges await our emerging leaders but with PDA training these future leaders will be equipped to meet those challenges.

— The author is dean of the Professional Development Academy, coordinator of the landscape management program, University of Maryland, and author of the book “Business Principles of Landscape Contracting.” Contact him at scohan@umd.edu.
If you feel that your pre-emergent must be applied within a tight timetable, you’re not using Barricade® herbicide. Our unique non-staining formulation allows for earlier spring applications. And low solubility means greater length of control. There’s even flexibility in formulations — liquid, wettable granular, or on fertilizer. Let Barricade give you the flexibility you need to run your business. For more information, call the Syngenta Customer Resource Center at 1-866-SYNGENTA or visit us at www.syngentaprofessionalproducts.com.

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Maintenance tracking made simple

As the seasons change, so does the use of outdoor power equipment. In northern climates, mowing equipment is stored and traded for snow removal equipment; while in the south, the amount of mowing may just slow down. No matter where you call home, it’s important to have a maintenance program tailored for your equipment. First, take an inventory of every piece of equipment that will require service. As a suggestion, create a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for each piece. Fill in the equipment model and serial numbers along with the engine numbers and date of purchase for each piece. This inventory is your tool for future reference.

Once you have your equipment inventory, find the owner's manual for each piece. Typically, each manual includes a maintenance table. Can’t find the owner’s manual? Many manufacturers have manuals available online. For example, owner’s and parts manuals for Briggs & Stratton Engines are available at www.briggsandstratton.com. Copy the appropriate maintenance tables for each piece on their spreadsheet.

Next, put together a parts list. List all the necessary parts for each piece on their respective sheet using the original equipment manufacturer’s part numbers. Then total all of the parts from all of your sheets to make one easy shopping list. You may gain pricing leverage from a supplier based on the size of your whole order.

If you have an idea of how many pieces of equipment you have, what maintenance is required, and the parts are in-hand, your efficiency increases.

After completing the maintenance, add notes for each piece on their sheets for future reference. This could include items such as checking a particular area for wear, or lubricating a particular fitting or replacing a particular part. If you have a very large equipment fleet, you may want to consider a computer program such as Trims Ground Management Software that keeps a maintenance schedule and tracks labor and parts costs.

By Mark Nelson, Master Instructor, Briggs & Stratton Customer Education

Diesel vs gasoline

BY HARRY SMITH

A reader recently inquired which engine would be better for his zero turn mowers. He had the choice between a 3-cylinder diesel and a 2-cylinder gasoline engine. My answer was, "it depends." That is not an evasive answer. You must consider many factors when you make these decisions. So what are some of the questions you must answer to reach this decision?

First considerations

My reader’s first decision will be based on initial cost. The liquid-cooled diesel unit costs more.

The second issue is maintenance. How good is his maintenance and is he willing to meet the somewhat more demanding maintenance schedule of a diesel? Admittedly, part of the additional maintenance involves cooling system service on this liquid-cooled engine.

The third issue is contending with an additional fuel. Unless the diesel unit would run all day on a single fill up, he will need another fuel container on the truck. Many landscape contractors complain that fuel handling is costly and time-consuming. So far there are few companies that can run successfully on just one fuel. No diesel weed trimmers and no 2-cycle zero turn mowers exist.

Reliability, efficiency, durability

The diesel engine has the potential to be more durable, but only if the maintenance schedule is faithfully followed. Diesel engines are rough on oil so it is not a good idea to try to extend oil change intervals. Your diesel engine may require more frequent oil and filter changes than a comparable gas engine, plus you must change fuel filters faithfully. Diesels have a very low tolerance for dirty fuel.

Diesels do have more torque than comparable gas engines and therefore can handle high-load situations better. A diesel engine is usually a bit more fuel efficient than a comparable gas engine, but be sure to factor in the additional service costs of the diesel.

Diesel engine mowers will have a higher resale value, so if you turn your fleet at regular intervals this can be a consideration.

As usual we raise more questions than answers. Is there a diesel in your future? There might be. Answer all the questions; address all the costs, potential savings and maintenance requirements. Your answer might be yes.

— The author is turf equipment professor at Lake City Community College, Lake City, FL. Contact him at smith@lakecitycc.edu
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* 34-36 HP are projected gross HP ratings for the 993cc vertical shaft engine models. Production engines available in July, 2006.
Developing a healthy technology department will improve your options when selling your business.

**Put your tech house in order**

**BY TYLER WHITAKER**

When retiring or selling your company the last thing you want to worry about is the stability of your company's technology. Ask yourself, "Is my technology department an asset or liability?" As retirement approaches or you are faced with the prospect of selling your business, the answer to this question depends on your previous technology investments.

**Systems boost profits**

Smooth running and efficient technology can make your company easier to sell. It can even bring in premium dollars if you have developed special systems that give you a competitive edge. Even modest investments in useful technology can create advantages for your business now and fewer headaches later. It's proven that efficiently run businesses drop more money to the bottom line and result in higher company valuation.

What you need are systems that provide visibility into the inner workings of the business. Everything from timely financials with accurate job costing, to up-to-the-minute inventory status for your shop, can alert you or the future business owner of problems before they become nightmares. By automating the collection of business metrics, your technology department can create a "dashboard report" for you to understand how fast your business is moving, how much gas is in the tank, and how far you can drive it. Stone cold facts can keep your business growing without you and help guarantee you get the payments you deserve.

Defined processes, policies, and procedures are a clear sign of a valuable technology department. Typically they are stored in a central knowledge base or repository for easy access in the case of an emergency. Great technology staffs understand the need to document how everything works. This comes from too many late nights trying to repair complex systems. Contrary to popular belief, technology professionals do value sleep. Documentation creates productive and competent staff members, ensures less down time, and lowers your overhead; all resulting in increased value of the company.

**Stress tech investments**

One of the most critical items your technology staff can help with, in the event of a sale, is to provide a complete asset inventory of computer hardware and software licenses. Too often these items are not properly tracked on the company's asset list. Software is routinely expensed and forgotten about. Hardware failures occur and replacement parts are rarely updated to the original systems specs. We spend a lot of money on these items; why not get paid for that investment? Without this inventory, you will lack a clear understanding of the company's technology investment.

Developing a healthy technology department will improve your options when selling your business. It takes time and investment to get your technology house in order, but during your exit strategy it's definitely worth the effort.

— The author is chief technology officer for the Symbiot Business Group. Contact him at 801/733-6900 or twhitaker@symbiot.biz.
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Circle 127
Contractors share the advantages of rubber track loaders

John Perkins, owner of Perkins Landscape Contractor in Minneapolis, credits rubber track loaders for much of the success of his business. "Everyone is coming over to rubber track loaders," he says. Indeed, a quick review of industry sales shows that rubber track loaders are one of the fastest growing segments of the compact construction market. In 1997, for example, the entire rubber track loader market accounted for only 850 units sold. In 2004, however, the market was estimated to have been approximately 16,000 units, many of them going to landscape company owners. Rubber track loaders offer advantages for the landscaper in terms of traction, stability, operator sensitivity and productivity.

"About six months ago, we were applying infield mix to a very wet baseball diamond," says Jeff Telgenhoff, founder and president of Pacific Landscape, Inc. in Snohomish, WA. "The skid steer we had was useless in those conditions. We finished the job with a [rubber track loader], and the next day we sold the skid steer."

For Perkins, the main advantage of rubber track loaders is that he can operate on turf with zero damage while at the same time get good traction. In winter, he replaces the smooth tracks with the standard treaded versions. He reports even better traction.

In general, Perkins says one big reason that compact track loaders are so popular is that they are extremely stable and balanced.

"They hold grade so well and they are so stable, any attachment works much better on a tracked machine," he says.

Dennis Dixon, who founded Dixon Concrete Designs a year ago in Redding, CA, tried out his new rubber track loader on his
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own back yard before attempting a commercial job with it. He says the experience convinced him he had made a wise purchase.

"The yard is odd-shaped with a steep hill and hard, native soil," Dixon says. "A wheeled skid steer wouldn't have made it without tearing everything up underneath. But the RC-60 (ASV) just kept traction, kept going and kept pushing, without leaving a mark."

Inevitably, when a product category begins to grow it attracts manufacturers and several now manufacture rubber track loaders. Finding the model that suits your particular needs may require some research, but it is out there — or you may see your competitor using it on a property in your area.

However, once you've researched and decided on the model that's perfect for your business, you too will be on the forefront of a significant equipment trend.
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Circle 130
When buying a spreader, the first thing to consider is the scope of the work you’ll be doing, says Harvey Barnett, general manager at Customers Outdoor Services in Milford, MI. This view is echoed by Mike Nelson, CSP, president of M.J. Nelson Group, Inc. (formerly New York Snow Pros). Nelson adds that another important consideration is the quality and proximity of the dealer from whom you’ll be purchasing the spreader.

Nelson’s firm operates in the Hudson Valley area of New York State, where the winters can be brutally challenging. Barnett’s firm faces a similar situation in Michigan. Barnett says that the type of spreader purchased depends to some extent on the equipment, particularly trucks, that the company already has. So you may need to go back a step, to the purchase of the truck to which you’ll be attaching the spreader. “If you only salt one condo or a small area in the winter, where you’d use a few tons of salt per event, that level of use doesn’t justify the purchase of a dump truck,” says Barnett. “If you don’t need a dump truck, then you won’t want to buy a dump truck-mounted spreader.” He suggests that if you are getting jobs done using a pick up truck, consider a V-box spreader. On the other hand, a tailgate spreader is easier to store in the off-season.

The strength of the dealer is an important issue. “The first thing I look at when buying any equipment is, ‘Who is selling this to me?’” says Nelson. “Proximity is my No. 1 consideration. If my equipment goes down during an event, I need someone who can get my operation up and running as quickly as possible. I’ve been with the same dealer for 15, 20 years,” Nelson says. “The fact that this dealer has always provided support is very important to our operation.”

continued on page 50
continued from page 48

**Liquid vs. salt**

Another consideration is liquid vs. salt spreaders. Nelson says that when he considers the extra cost involved in purchasing a liquid spreader, “we look at how many tons per lane-mile can we cover when we spread the liquid. We have to ensure that the capacity and yield we get is worth the cost.” And when it comes to liquid, the costs can be prohibitive. Barnett says that his company bought liquid-spreading equipment a few years back. Initially, it was a mistake. “We listened to the sales pitch [for the liquid spreader]. We heard what we wanted to hear, so we bought. But we hadn’t done any research. We didn’t know whether liquid would replace salt in our operations. So the equipment sat unused for a few years.”

The spreader didn’t see the light of day until Barnett’s company did the research through SIMA and other sources to determine the appropriate conditions for using liquid. “Once we figured out the niche for the equipment, we could use it. There are applications that justify the cost difference in using liquids — parking structures for example, where you don’t want a material that is too corrosive. On the other hand, we don’t expect liquids to ever replace salt.”

\[\text{Liquid vs. salt continued from page 48}\]
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person can do it in 5 minutes. Sweeper itself is made of durable polyurethane and has no complex hydraulic or electrical system. It is powered by a self-contained, gasoline engine with its own battery and fuel supply. A part of the system's air is vented off, increasing vacuum power. Remaining air is recirculated, producing the blast force under the sweeping head.

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Bradco Bucket Brooms from ATI attach quickly to skid steer loaders. Units come in 72- or 84-in. widths. They hold 17-19.9 cubic ft. of debris, respectively. Hookup is with simple pins. An optional 25-gallon water kit is available. Comes with two-year warranty.

For more information contact Bradco at 800/922-2981 or www.get-attached.com / circle no. 256

• Check the unit's weight.
• Check the unit's noise level.
• Is the unit EPA Phase-II and CARB Tier-II approved?
• Can it multi-task or run off other power sources?
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• Be aware of the different uses of rubber, nylon or steel brushes and order accordingly.
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The AA-Tach PVI fits into almost any pickup truck that can move 1-15 mph. Unit weighs only 1,000 lbs. and comes with camper-style jacks that make it easy to load or unload. One

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For more information contact Echo at 847/540-8400 or www.echo-usa.com / circle no. 257

RedMax

The EPA Phase-II, CARB Tier-II certified EBZ8000 blower is powered by an air-cooled, Strato-charged 2-cycle gas engine. Unit weighs 24.9 lbs. and has a fuel capacity of 4.8 pints. Unit has an extra-large dual, foam-plus-paper FreshFlow filter system and patent-pending FreeFlow non-dog air intake. The extra-large diameter continued on page 54
DON'T COUNT ON THIS.
continued from page 52
blower tubes increase leaf and debris movement. Operates at 78 dB.
For more information contact RedMax at 800/291-8251 or www.redmax.com / circle no. 258

American Water Broom
The C4 Water Broom connects to any water spigot and cleans well-drained surfaces in about one-fifth the time and uses about one-tenth the water of a hose alone. Turns tap water into a high pressure, highly maneuverable line of water that cleans quickly and easily. Unit has almost no moving parts. Removes small, abrasive dirt and dust that sweepers and vacuums miss.
For more information contact American Water Broom at 770/451-2000 or www.waterbroom.com / circle no. 260

Walco Equipment
Broomer is made from heavy gauge steel, with a durable finish for long life. Comes in 5.5-ft. wide, 10-row or 3-ft., 8-row models. Tough polypropylene bristles are thermally bonded into an extruded polypropylene strip that is inserted into the steel base. Replacement of bristles is as simple as sliding out the old and sliding in new strips. Broomer can be mounted on trucks, tractors, forklifts, skid steer units, bucket loaders and mowers. Unit is the one formerly sold by Sno-Way.
For more information contact Walco Equipment at 519/669-1401 or www.walcoequipment.com / circle no. 265

Walco Equipment
Broomer is made from heavy gauge steel, with a durable finish for long life. Comes in 5.5-ft. wide, 10-row or 3-ft., 8-row models. Tough polypropylene bristles are thermally bonded into an extruded polypropylene strip that is inserted into the steel base. Replacement of bristles is as simple as sliding out the old and sliding in new strips. Broomer can be mounted on trucks, tractors, forklifts, skid steer units, bucket loaders and mowers. Unit is the one formerly sold by Sno-Way.
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continued on page 56
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Remove roots, brush, rocks and other debris while leaving dirt behind with the new root grapple. It can clear brush and overgrowth on landscaping projects or when natural disasters hit. Skeletal design allows dirt to fall between the teeth, minimizing topsoil removal. Curved bottom teeth let operator scoop material without plunging the grapple into the ground. Available in 72- and 82-in. widths, it may be used with Bobcat skid steer loaders (models S175 through S300), Bobcat compact track loaders (models T180 through T300) and the A300 all-wheel steer loader. The hydraulic-controlled grapple features the Bob-Tach mounting system.

For more information contact Bobcat at 866/823-7898 or www.bobcat.com / circle no. 266

Toro

The Toro Power Box Rake attachment, for use with Toro Dingo compact utility loaders, transforms rough terrain into a prepared seedbed. It is designed for construction and renovation projects including seedbed and sod preparation, trench filling, blending grades and leveling surfaces, plus job site cleanup. It features triple-sealed, shielded roller bearings that stand up to harsh soil conditions. Pure carbide proprietary teeth are designed for long life and ensure the best possible seedbed sub-base fracture pattern, promoting optimum moisture retention and release.

For more information contact Toro at 800/803-8676 or www.toro.com / circle no. 267

Worksaver

Ideal for loading logs or piling brush and other hard-to-handle debris, the Worksaver Grapple Rake has dual upper grapples for picking up

continued on page 59
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continued from page 56

brush and leaving dirt behind. It fits most front-end loaders or skid steers. Brackets available for most tractor models including Deere, AGCO, CNH, Bush Hog and others. Comes in 62- or 77-in. widths.

For more information contact Worksaver at 217/324-5973 or www.worksaver.com / circle no. 268

Swisher ▲

This 2-in-1 Lawn Vacuum and Trailer is perfect for a myriad of chores. The Lawn Vacuum quickly converts to a trailer by removing the mesh cover to get a sturdy 11.7-cubic ft., 500-pound capacity trailer with dump feature. Exclusive Snap Fit blower tube provides quick and easy dumping and reattachment to the debris bag. Vacuum is powered by a 5.5-hp Briggs & Stratton Intek engine. Vacuum bag capacity is 37 cubic ft., and it folds for easy storage.

For more information contact Swisher at 800/222-8183 or www.Swisherln.com / circle no. 269

Buffalo Turbine ▶

The KB2 and Hurricane/pto blowers will produce up to 10,000 cfm at 175 mph. The self-contained KB2 comes with a 23-hp Kohler engine, bolt-on trailer package and remote throttle and nozzle control kit. The model Hurricane/pto model is a 3-point hitch, belt driven blower unit, equipped with a remote nozzle control kit and built-in rear roller (designed for turf protection).

For more information contact Buffalo Turbine at 760/599-6915 or www.buffaloturbine.com / circle no. 270

Woods Equipment Co.

XB Extreme Duty Box Scraper works with either Category 1 or 2 tractors with 40-80 hp. Features two distinct cutting edges: one curved on the interior fixed blade, and a second flat cutting edge on the tailgate that minimizes the digging effect caused by traditional scraper designs. The specialized tailgate allows the XB to float over sand and coarse soil. Offers 28 cubic ft. capacity. Optional scarifier kit can be ordered to handle hard soil or rocky ground.

For more information contact Woods Equipment at 866/869-6637 or www.woodsonline.com / circle no. 271

Winch Enterprises

The hand-held Litter Catch is perfect for light jobs. It is 14 in. wide, 8 in. high, with a 30-in. handle. Made of steel, it has tear-resistant collection bag. Also available is the book, “Cleaning Up for Cash,” on how to leverage commercial lawn care customers into cleanup customers.

For more information contact Winch Enterprises at 519/669-1401 / circle no. 272

Patriot Products

CSV-3090H Wood Chipper Shredder combines 9hp-Honda engine with a heavy duty, tri-plated rotor. Outboard bearing supports the rotor, taking the load off the engine shaft for longer life and smoother running. Also includes low oil shutdown, semi-pneumatic tires, 3-in. chipping
Express Blower

The Express Blower RB-20HD Rock & Soil Blower is powered by a 335-hp Caterpillar C-9 engine. It includes heavy duty hydraulic and blower package, solid belt reversible floor, remote radio control, electronic control module, hydraulic tailgate. It will move more than 91 tons of sand per hour, or 125 tons of three-eighths round rock.

For more information contact Express Blower at 800/285-7227 or www.rockblower.com

circle no. 274

TrynEx International

Designed for cleanup, material handling and snow removal applications, the SweepEx Mega 480 is ideal for use with compact utility loaders. Built with a 48-in. mainframe, it is adaptable to most service vehicles. Unit has 11 brush rows.

For more information contact TrynEx International at 800/725-8377

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The Turf Tidy works with 25-hp or larger tractors. Model 1710 is trailed by a standard draw bar and powered by tractor pto. Fully floating, bearing-mounted 3-in-1 cutting head follows the contours of the ground, ensuring clean, even pick-up. The whole unit runs on four large rear flotation tires to minimize compaction.

For more information contact Redexim Charterhouse at 570/602-3058 or www.redexim.com / circle no. 276

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**Glenmac**

The Harley Power Box Rake uses a tooth roller to handle rocks down to one-half in. in diameter. Comes in two versions: 48-, 72- or 90-in. roller widths for skid steers; and 48- and 66-in. widths for tractors.

For more information contact Glenmac at 800/437-9779 or www.glenmac.com / circle no. 277

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Just a few miles from downtown Atlanta, the Post Briarcliff Apartment Homes’ lush grounds give the feeling of being back on an old Southern plantation. Except that this plantation has swimming pools, a fitness center, tennis courts, a sculpture garden, picnic areas and all the other modern amenities expected at a Post property.

The Post Briarcliff property consists of 688 apartment units in 18 buildings, spread over 30 acres, including nine acres of wooden ornamentals that surround the property. There are two acres of Meyer zoysia and Tift Bermudagrass cut in diagonal lines, which the landscaping crews alternate directions on weekly.

"Year-round color is one of the highlights of Post Briarcliff," says Mike Pullen, grounds supervisor for the past six years. "Each spring and fall our annual color beds are changed out by our landscape teams. In October, our 3,500 sq. ft. of annual beds are planted with pansies to provide color through the winter. Tulips and hyacinths are added in November for spring color. In mid-April, the pansies and tulips are replaced by vibrant summer annual displays."

The sculpture garden is built around six large pieces of art, as well as a water fountain, to give residents a quiet place to relax. The site also features an urban vegetable garden with 15 raised planters filled with an organically rich soil mix. Each plot is about 35 sq. ft., giving residents a chance to grow their own vegetables with the assistance of the three full-time members of the landscape team and two seasonal employees. The garden is landscaped with fruit-bearing plants and trees such as blueberries, strawberries, apples and pears, and only organic fertilizer and pesticides are used in it.

"Every month, we do a thorough grounds inspection," Pullen says. "During the inspection, improvements are noted and suggestions are made to improve the overall quality of the landscape. Our lush grounds and this attention to detail is really the calling card of this development."

Editors’ note: Landscape Management is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscapes. The 2005 winners will be named at the annual meeting of the Professional Grounds Management Society in November. For more information on the 2004 awards, contact PGMS at: 720 Light St. • Baltimore, MD 21230
• Phone: 410/223-2861. Web site: www.pgms.org
The grounds at Atlanta's Post Briarcliff Apartment Homes include a sculpture garden, annual beds and an organic vegetable garden.
Strange that a guy who works in dirt would have better job security than the athletes who play on it? Tom Burns is the director of grounds at Ameriquest Field in Arlington, home of the Texas Rangers baseball club. As any good baseball grounds pro, he's expert at two entirely different skills — preparing and maintaining the "dirt" infield where 70% of a baseball game's action takes place, and maintaining the turfgrass, which makes up more than two thirds of the field and gives the game its special charm.

The Bermudagrass outfield at Ameriquest gives Burns and his crew tough maintenance challenges, mostly because of the stadium's architecture. The south wall of the 11-year-old stadium is the highest part of the 49,000-seat structure and shades the grass in right field from late September to mid April.

Soil on that part of the field can be 10 degrees cooler than the rest of the field. Bermudagrass requires sunshine and warm soil temperatures to come out of dormancy and thrive. Since the baseball season starts in early spring, the lingering shade is a huge challenge for Burns and his team.

"We usually end up resodding 1,200 yards of turf in that area of the field," says Burns. This year was different though and he only had to resod a fraction of the right field area.

One way he met that particular challenge, and several others he faced this past season was by using biostimulants in his fertility program. The products he used were the microbial fertilizer TurfVigor and a microbial biofungicide EcoGuard. He began using them this past spring at the suggestion of his local fertilizer distributor and working in conjunction with a representative from Novozymes, the company that manufactures the products.

Soon after he began the program he saw the brown patch that had been threatening his infield disappear and the damaged area return to health.

"I was really impressed that the grass recovered in a couple of weeks," recalls Burns. He was equally pleased at how fast the field, overseeded with ryegrass, greened prior to the team's mid-April home opener, then how the ryegrass transitioned out, allowing the Bermudagrass to take over.

Burns continued applying biostimulants during the summer and says that the grass remained as healthy as he's seen it during his tenure with the Rangers. He applied the liquid products himself, spoonfeeding the...
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- Forester Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Specialist

Irrigation Contractors & Consultants
☐ Yes ☐ No

- Irrigation Systems, Landscaping/Gardens, Hardscape Materials

1. My primary business at this location is: (Fill in ONE only)

- Landscape Contractors/Service Companies
- Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators (ground & air)
- Irrigation Contractors & Consultants
- Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify)

2. Which of the following best describes your title? (Fill in ONE only)

- Executive/Administrator: President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Director of Physical Plant
- Manager/Supervisor: Assistant, Architect, Landscape/Gardens Manager, Superintendent, Fireman, Supervisor
- Government Official: Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
- Specialist: Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
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3. Which of the following services does your company provide? (Fill in ALL that apply)

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- Design/Build
- Product/Facilities

4. Type of customer served? (Fill in ONE ONLY)

☐ Commercial ☐ Residential ☐ Both

5. Which of the following landscape products do you purchase or specify? (Fill in ALL that apply)

☐ Fertilizers
☐ Insecticides
☐ Herbicides
☐ Paver/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks
☐ Turf Disease Control
☐ Turf Insect Control
☐ Turf Weed Control
☐ Turf Aeration
☐ Irrigation Systems
☐ Landscaping Lighting
☐ Irrigation Services
☐ Pond/Lake Care
☐ Snow Removal
☐ Ornamental/Nursery Products
☐ Engines
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02 O Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators (ground & air)

03 O Irrigation Contractors & Consultants

04 O Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify)

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11 O Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers 12 O Manufacturers

13 O Other (please specify)

2. Which of the following best describes your title? (Fill in ONE only)

100 A Executive/Administrator - President. Owner. Partner. Director. General Manager. Chairman of the Board.

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3. Which of the following services does your company provide? (Fill in ALL that apply)

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09 O Tree Care

02 O Turf Insect Control

07 O Turf Aeration

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08 O Irrigation Systems

11 O Snow Removal

05 O Turf Disease Control

09 O Ornamental Care

DESIGN/BUILD

12 O Landscape Design

13 O Landscape Installation

14 O Irrigation Installation

15 O Paving/Deck/Patio Installation

16 O Other (please specify)

4. Type of customer served? (Fill in ONE ONLY)

A O Commercial

B O Residential

C O Both

5. Which of the following landscape products do you purchase or specify? (Fill in ALL that apply)

16 O Fertilizers

20 O Fungicides

24 O Irrigation Systems (Hardscape Materials)

28 O Ornamental/Nursery Products

30 O Sed/Sod

32 O Spreaders

34 O Truck Trailers

36 O Turf Fertilization

38 O Water Features

40 O Turf Disease Control

44 O Lawn Care Service Companies & Custom Chemical Applicators

48 O Irrigation Contractors & Consultants

50 O Other Contractors/Service Companies

54 O Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture

56 O Seed Growers. Turf Seed Growers & Nurseries

58 O Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers

60 O Manufacturers

62 O Other (please specify)

6. My firm's annual revenue is: (Fill in ONE only)

001 O More than $4,000,000

002 O $2,000,000-$4,000,000

003 O $1,000,000-$1,999,999

004 O $500,000-$999,999

005 O $250,000-$499,999

006 O $125,000-$249,999

007 O Less than $125,000

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turf that is growing almost entirely in sand, using a John Deere sprayer with a 200-gallon tank.

Burns is cautious in attributing the field's great condition solely to the use of biostimulants. He says that last winter (2004-2005) was relatively mild and that this past summer was hot and mostly dry. The Dallas area sweltered through more than 20 days of temperatures exceeding 100 degrees or higher. But the Bermuda-grass loved it.

"All I know is that with the weather we had and this new fertilizer program we used made it a lot easier to keep the field in great shape," says Burns. "I'm sure we'll be able to better gauge the effectiveness of the products as we go into the second season with them."

Preserving the old; adapting the new

Tom Burns learned many of his field management skills at old Cleveland Municipal Stadium. He worked under the demanding eye of Marshall Bossard, son of sports turf pioneer and legend Emil Bossard.

Municipal Stadium was built in 1931 and demolished in 1996. It was replaced by modern Browns Stadium. Municipal Stadium, was often referred to as the "Mistake on the Lake," but it had its share of great moments. It was the site where Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak came to an end. And what longtime sports fan can forget NFL great Jim Brown bowling over defenders often in the freezing rain or snow so common in Cleveland in November. For decades it was home for two professional sports teams, the Browns football team and the Cleveland Indians baseball team.

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ANDY SCOTT
Executive Director • Union Station Assistance Corporation

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What's not celebrated are the number of great grounds pros that it produced, too. Many, including Burns, are still in the industry.

Burns says the lessons he learned working on the grounds crew for Bossard can't be taught from books. "Preparing a baseball field is one of the hardest things you can do in sports turf and we got great on-the-job training," he recalls.

Has his job changed since he left Cleveland? You bet, says Burns.

For one thing, grounds pros have more tools to use, not to mention new species and varieties of turfgrass. The infield at Ameriquest Field is Sealsle seashore paspalum, which Burns refers to as "the Velcro infield" because it keeps hit baseballs in play for the infielders. The outfield is TifSport Bermuda-grass, a relatively new and comparatively cold-tolerant variety of the species. Neither grass was available as few as 10 years ago.

The job is more demanding, too. Or at least the expectations of viewers. Credit television for that, says Burns, especially high-definition television. "A viewer can see every little divot now," he says. — R.H.

Not only do fans in the stands expect a great field, so do viewers watching on television.

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December

5-8 Turfgrass Short Course and Sports Turf Short Course / Blacksburg, VA; Sponsored by Virginia Turfgrass Council; 757/464-1004; www.thevtc.org

6-9 Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show / Columbus, OH; Sponsored by Ohio Turfgrass Foundation; 888/683-3445; www.ohioturfgrass.org

6-8 RMRTA Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show / Denver, CO; Sponsored by Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Association; 303/770-2220; www.rmrt.org

6-8 New Jersey Turfgrass Conference & Show / Atlantic City, NJ; Sponsored by New Jersey Turfgrass Association; 215/757-NJTA; www.njturfgrass.org

6-7 Georgia Turfgrass Institute and Trade Show / Duluth, GA; Sponsored by Georgia Turfgrass Association; 706/335-6817; www.turfgrass.org

12-14 Texas Turfgrass Conference & Expo / San Antonio, TX; Sponsored by Texas Turfgrass Association; 800/830-8873; www.texasturf.com

January 2006

2 - February 16 Winter School for Turf Managers / Amherst, MA; Sponsored by UMass Extension; 518/892-0382; www.UMassGreenInfo.org

4-6 Minnesota Green Expo / Minneapolis, MN; Sponsored by Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association, Minnesota Turf & Grounds Foundation; 888/886-6652; www.minnesotagreen-expo.com

5-6 Mid-States Horticultural Expo / Louisville, KY; Sponsored by Kentucky Nursery & Landscape Association, the Tennessee Nursery & Landscape Association and the Southern Nursery Association; 770/953-3311; www.sna.org/midstates/

8-10 WESTERN 2006 / Overland Park, KS; Sponsored by Western Nursery and Landscape Association; 816/233-1481; www.wnla.org

8-15 Design Build Symposium at Sea / Port Canaveral, FL; Sponsored by Kinman Institute; 614/764-8733; www.kinmaninstitute.com

9-12 Virginia Turfgrass Conference / Richmond, VA; Sponsored by Virginia Turfgrass Council; www.thevtc.org

9-12 Turf Industry Conference and Expo / Winston-Salem, NC; Sponsored by Turfgrass Council of North Carolina; 910/695-1333; www.ncturfgrass.org

10-12 Eastern PA Turf Conference and Trade show / King of Prussia, PA; Sponsored by Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council; 814/238-2402; www.paturf.org

10-12 Congress 2006 / Fencecraft 2006 / Toronto, Canada; Sponsored by Landscape Ontario; 800/265-5656; www.hort-trades.com
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