STOP SCOUTING FOR GRUBS.

It doesn't matter what you're looking for, you get Merit® and you get rid of grubs. It nips every major grub species from egg-lay through second instar. And application timing isn't critical because of its residual power. So get off your knees. Prevent chronic callbacks. Get guaranteed, season-long control with the most effective grub eradicator on the market. Merit. Fear no grub. Call us at 1-800-331-2867 to learn more.
Imagination builds a team

Remember working like the dickens to write a great term paper or to finish a big project? I bet you haven’t forgotten the guilty pleasure of playing hooky a few days later, either.

Gone fishin’
One day each July, the “team” at Russo Lawn & Landscape plays hooky. Employees at the 13-year-old landscape company grab their fishing poles, stock the coolers and head out together for a day on the ocean. Sometimes they land stripers and sometimes blue fish... and sometimes not much at all. But they always come back with great stories, and they always have a great time.

“Hey, thanks Mike!” That’s what they say when they get back to the dock. That’s because owner Mike Russo picks up the tab. It’s one of the unique “perks” that make his operation a different place to work. In many respects, Russo is a different kind of an owner as is evidenced by community projects he and his crews do absolutely gratis. But let’s focus on the imaginative team-building activities and exercises that make his company such a great place to work.

Cash, food and parties
For example, the owner gives his “team” an $800 cash certificate each month. The money is to be used towards any controllable repairs. If any incidents occur that result in controllable damage, the dollar amount of the replacement/repair is deducted from the $800; the rest is divided among team members.

Pizza, anyone? If all of the company’s crews meet or come in below their budgeted man-hours for the week, everyone gets pizza. Career Enhancement Director Samantha Wood wrote it for all to see.

Need a little bit extra in your paycheck this coming month? If you work on Russo’s team, you can earn it if you accrue enough points to be selected as “Team Member of the Month.” The rules are simple and they’re in English and in Spanish. Heck, you might even earn “Team Member of the Year.” Francisco Mari won it last year and earned himself and his family extra cash and a 27-in. television.

We all know what “sick pay” is, but what about paying somebody for “well days?” Mike does. A team member earns 1/2 hour for each week they’re on time every day and don’t have any early dismissals. You’re allowed two paid “well days” each year.

Russo Lawn & Landscape embraced the JP Horizons Pro Training Challenge, and won first place in the program in 2000 and shared first place in 2001. Team members have continued to meet each week in “Career Enhancement Meetings.” That’s where the serious stuff takes place.

But there’s plenty of fun stuff, too, like an annual holiday party and an annual Success Banquet to start each new season. Besides, where else do you get a day’s pay for putting a fishing pole in your hands?

— Information provided by The Owners’ Network, a program created by JP Horizons, Inc. and sponsored by Weed Man. Visit the Web site www.owners1.com or call 877/574-5267.
The Toolcat 5600 combines the best features of a loader, pickup truck and attachment carrier. Designed to excel at large property maintenance and commercial grounds keeping, the 5600 is an entirely new concept — the utility work machine!

Call toll-free 1-866-823-7898 ext. 0189 for a FREE Video Catalog and 2003 Buyer's Guide. Or visit our website www.bobcat.com/0189

Bobcat Company • P.O. Box 6000 • West Fargo, ND 58078

Bobcat
One Tough Animal

Ingersoll Rand business
Green Industry pros must go to high schools to inform young people of potentially rewarding careers.

**Needed: trained shop techs**

demand for skilled turf equipment technicians and maintenance shop managers increases daily. The Green Industry offers these trained personnel a range of exciting career opportunities. Too bad that few young people recognize this.

**Working to meet a need**

Lake City Community College is trying to change this. It has a long history of training professionals for the Green Industry. Its two-year Golf Course Operations and Landscape Technology programs began in 1967. LCCC’s Turf Equipment Management program (TEM) started in 1973, and Irrigation Management began in 1999. These are one-year programs.

TEM was started to meet calls from the golf industry for mechanics trained in maintenance and repair on specific turf equipment. In recent years, the landscape industry has also been seeking more of these potentially valuable team members.

The Lake City program started small and developed slowly, and demand for these students wasn’t that great, at least not until the mid-1980s. But that changed when golf’s popularity as a televised spectator sport exploded. The public saw impeccably groomed courses on TV and pressured their superintendents for similar conditions. The superintendents, in turn, asked equipment manufacturers for help, and they responded by producing more sophisticated and technically complex machines.

Seemingly overnight, the golf industry began screaming for skilled equipment technicians capable of interpreting equipment manuals, establishing PM programs, setting up parts rooms, ordering parts properly, grinding and setting reel mowers, managing parts inventory, operating computers and keeping accurate records. Now the landscape industry needs them, too.

Today, graduates of LCCC’s TEM program are in high demand. The 15 or 18 students completing the course each year receive several different job offers. Starting salaries range from $22,000 to $40,000.

It would seem that recruiting students to a one-year program that can place just about every graduate in a good job would be easy. It’s not. Few people recognize it as a profession. Think about it: How many students are counseled into turf equipment mechanics?

**Let’s do something**

Let’s go to high schools to inform young people about this and other potentially rewarding careers in the Green Industry. High school automotive mechanics students are logical recruits, but don’t overlook young people considering college. Many of them have no idea what major to pursue. Too often they overlook lucrative careers available through programs like ours.

We must talk to the student groups and invite them, their instructors and their counselors to our facilities so they can see a modern shop loaded with today’s sophisticated turf equipment.

The landscape industry needs dedicated and trained young people, and nowhere is this need greater than in its maintenance shops. Who’s going to keep our sophisticated turf equipment maintained and repaired?

— The author is with Lake City Community College. For more information about recruiting students into Green Industry shop management, contact him at piersolj@lakecitycc.edu.
Eight straight months of hand-weeding around the clock can take its toll on the average worker.

Granular GRASS AND BROADLEAF PREEMERGENT Herbicide

It won't do your bottom line any good, either. Research shows that hand-weeding can knock your profits for a loop in no time. Maybe that's why so many nursery operators and landscapers are choosing the superior control of Snapshot® specialty herbicide. Snapshot can be used over-the-top of more than 413 field-grown and 235 container-grown ornamentals, for control of 111 broadleaf weeds and annual grasses — for up to eight months. That's more than any other preemergence product on the market. Plus, it's gentle on ornamentals. This year, knock out weeds and grasses — instead of your workers — with the proven performance of Snapshot.

Day and Night. Month after Month.

*Trademark of Dow AgroSciences LLC
Always read and follow label directions.
www.dowagro.com/turf 1-800-355-3728
Shindaiwa teams with ServiceBench

TUALATIN, OR — Shindaiwa, Inc. has teamed with ServiceBench for its online product registrations and electronic submission of warranty claims. The web-based technology of ServiceBench is a complete internet solution for manufacturers, distributors, and dealers in simplifying and speeding up various business to business transactions.

Stihl to expand VA production facility

VIRGINIA BEACH — Outdoor power equipment manufacturer Stihl Inc. announced it will be expanding its operations in Virginia Beach. Total cost will be $60.8 million, which will include adding 228,000 sq. ft. to its U.S. headquarters in the Oceana West Corporate Park.

Encore has new MI distributor

WATERFORD, MI — Encore Mfg. Co. has granted distribution rights for the state of Michigan to X-Sell Distribution. The Encore power equipment line includes riding and walk-behind mowers and dethatchers.

HSS RentX opens new branches

DENVER, CO — National rental chain HSS RentX has recently opened tool and equipment rental branches in Longview, TX and Oakland, CA. The company says it expects to open additional branches in Virginia and Colorado by mid-year.

D'Avino leads Landscape Group

Advantstar Communications, the parent company of Landscape Management, Golfdom, Pest Control and the recently launched Landscape Design/Build, is pleased to announce that Tony D'Avino has been named Group Publisher for the Advantstar Landscape and Pest Control Group.

D’Avino comes to the group from Penton Media, Inc., where he most recently served as Group Publisher of Material Handling Management, Transportation and Distribution and Supply Chain Technologies. He replaces John Payne, who served as Group Publisher from 1995 until early 2003.

“Were extremely fortunate to have Tony joining our team as we continue to grow our businesses in the landscape, golf and pest control markets,” said Alex DeBarr, Advantstar Executive Vice President. “We’d also like to wish John Payne all the best in his next endeavor and offer our thanks for his efforts over the past seven years.”

D’Avino said he’s excited to take on the new role. “This is a great chance to work with the most-respected and fastest-growing group of magazines in our industry. We intend to continue our partnership with our readers and advertisers to build on that success.”

D’Avino can be reached at 800/225-4569 or tdavino@advanstar.com.

John Deere Landscapes acquires Overbrook Nursery

John Deere Landscapes, a wholesale distributor of landscape and irrigation supplies, has acquired Overbrook Nursery in Round Hill, VA.

The new John Deere Landscapes branch will feature a complete selection of nursery stock on the seven-acre facility, along with irrigation equipment and landscape supplies, including seed, sod, fertilizer and more.

John Deere Landscapes now has a total of seven branches throughout Virginia: Chantilly, Chesapeake, Midlothian, Newport News, Norfolk, Round Hill and Springfield.

“The Overbrook acquisition is a major step forward in our strategic plan to provide landscape and irrigation professionals with an extensive selection of installation supplies,” says Phil Kerchner, Regional Vice President for John Deere Landscapes.

“Contractors will find everything they need — from nursery stock to soil amendments, grass seed, fertilizer, pavers and tools to irrigation equipment, landscape lighting and more.”

“The Round Hill location is well-positioned to serve the expanding Washington, D.C. market, and key Overbrook staff members will remain on board,” Kerchner adds.
2003 SUPER BOWL TURF*

PENNINGTON TURFGRASS.
BEST YARDS IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD.

On any field of competition, long-term performance is the true test of superiority, and that's where PENNINGTON Professional Grade Turfgrass consistently outperforms the competition. Backed by more than 50 years of research and experience, the full family of PENNINGTON Professional Grade Turfgrass products scores high on beauty and utility, providing solutions for every condition, at every athletic level, at any time of year. Turn it up a notch with PENNINGTON Professional Grade Turfgrass. The best yards in the neighborhood aren't necessarily the hardest to come by.

sportturf@penningtonseed.com  www.penningtonseed.com  1-800-286-6100 ext 280

*Pennington's Jet perennial ryegrass and Mallard Kentucky Bluegrass sod used in Ousloumm Stadium, home of the 2003 Super Bowl. Photo of field for illustration purposes only.
The PENNINGTON Ryegrass foursome represents the best performing family of commercially seeded ryegrass ever to grace a golf course. Backed by over 50 years of experience and an ongoing research alliance with leading universities throughout the United States, PENNINGTON SEED continues to raise the performance bar in the ryegrass category. From the top-performing Applaud and Integra varieties to the fine texture and dense turf characteristics of Sonata and Jet, PENNINGTON Ryegrass consistently delivers top turf quality, disease resistance, density, and color, for a healthy course that looks beautiful. And when the course looks good, you look good. Call today and let us show you how PENNINGTON Ryegrass can help reduce your course handicaps.
ValleyCrest acquires The Impact Group

CALABASAS, CA — ValleyCrest Companies, the nation’s largest privately held landscape services firm, has acquired The Impact Group, a landscape maintenance company headquartered in Delray Beach, FL.

The acquisition is aimed at strengthening ValleyCrest’s existing southeast Florida operations and landscape services capabilities in Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties.

“We share a common commitment to responsive customer service and a similar approach to delivering quality landscape maintenance,” says Richard Sperber, President of ValleyCrest. “As a national company, we bring technical expertise, resources and depth of experience to an already outstanding organization.”

Co-founded by Ray Keenan, President, in 1990, The Impact Group has expertise in developing landscape maintenance solutions for a range of commercial customers including property management companies, office parks and homeowner associations.

Under terms of the agreement, The Impact Group will operate as ValleyCrest Landscape Maintenance. Keenan and Impact Group Vice President Bob DeFrain will assume responsibility as ValleyCrest vice presidents and oversee the company’s landscape maintenance operations in Delray Beach, Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach.

“Although the landscape maintenance industry is still fragmented following the roll-up activities of the late ’90s, we believe the opportunities for strategic acquisitions remain strong,” adds Sperber.

Professional members of the American Society of Irrigation Consultants have passed an extensive peer review and qualification process.

Working with an ASIC member gives you the confidence that a highly-qualified irrigation consultant is on the job, helping to protect your interests and your investment.

Contact ASIC to find a consultant near you.

Irrigation is a major investment...

Be Sure.

American Society of Irrigation Consultants
221 NORTH LASALLE ST
CHICAGO, IL 60601
312.372.7090
FAX: 312.372.6160
WWW.ASIC.ORG
BUFFALO, NY — The Sixth Annual Snow and Ice Symposium unfolds in the Buffalo Convention Center here June 12 to 14. If you’re in the snow and ice management business, this will be the place see the latest equipment, network with fellow contractors and hear some of the industry’s most knowledgeable owners and consultants.

The following are some of the show’s presenters:

- Joseph Giambra, Commissioner of Public Works, Parks and Streets for the City of Buffalo: Buffalo’s Snow Fighting Plan
- Gerald Krueger, Ph.D., CPE, Krueger Ergonomics Consultants: Strategies to Manage Operator Fatigue
- Rick Winnestaffer, CLP, CSP, WinnScapes, Inc., Columbus, OH: Plow Your Profits into Real Estate
- Ed Laflamme, Grass Roots Consulting, Inc., Huntington, CT: Proven Sales Techniques
- Nick DiBenedetto, ND Landscaping, Topsfield, MA: An "Ideal Modeling" System to Boost Snow Profits
- Peggy Allin, CSP, VP of Operations, Allin Companies, Erie, PA: Dispatching Made Easy
- Judith Guido, KehoeGuido Co., Laguna Niguel, CA: Strategic Planning Essentials
- Jeff Tovar, CSP, President, and Rick Lenth, CSP, VP of Administration, Tovar’s Snowplowing, Inc., Elgin, IL: Job Costing: Control Your Costs
- David Tucker, President of CLIP-Sensible Software, Inc., Ijamsville, NJ: Make Systems Work

For more information or to register, call SIMA at 814/835-3577 or visit the Web site www.sima.org.

Correction

In last month’s article, “Seed trade keeps innovating,” Seed Research of Oregon’s Showcase Kentucky bluegrass variety was mistakenly listed as a Patten Seed Co. variety. Also, SRO’s SR 9554 variety was called “Providence.” This was inaccurate as well.