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OUTLOOK

By Bruce F. Shank, Executive Editor



Mrs. Reagan is escorted by AAN Executive Director Robert Lederer (left) and AAN President Henry Weller (right) into the award ceremony.

AAN's example is worth copying for turf groups

As I sat in the East Room of the White House, 25 ft. from Mrs. Reagan, I could not help but be impressed with the American Association of Nurserymen's sophistication and clout in Washington, D.C. No doubt, it was a magnificent performance with AAN Executive Director Bob Lederer in special form. AAN has truly won over the past six administrations with the importance of landscaping and the businesses which supply it.

AAN is termed the "umbrella group" with close control over the National Landscape Association, the Wholesale Nursery Growers of America, Garden Centers of America, National Association of Plant Patent Owners, and the Horticultural Research Institute. Through the Allied Landscape Industry Council, AAN works with ALCA, PGMS, NAA, ISA, PLCAA, GCSAA and other landscape groups.

Over the years, I've attended a number of organizational meetings for an International Turf Association. Factions and bylaw differences kept the organization from getting off the ground. The desire was there but the support of the power groups was less than adequate to make it happen.

The impressive growth of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America has added to the importance of the turf industry. The staff of GCSAA, ALCA, and PGMS now recognize PLCAA as a definite power in the turf industry.

The turf industry would benefit from these groups cooperating to establish a stronger identity for turf. Things like a Washington lobbyist, a turf marketing council, and turf research fund would clarify the national image of the turf market. A member need not join another association to get improved representation in government and industry. Cooperation between existing associations, under a separate, joint organization, could do the trick. The first move has to be made by either GCSAA or PLCAA however.

WTT