

Short People Got Nobody

The reaction to Randy Newman's *Short People Got Nobody* was swift and loud when the song first aired on radio in the early 70's. Short people felt the song was an insensitive putdown by tall people. They called radio stations to protest, they picketed Newman's concerts for months, and they wrote new lyrics to the tune knocking tall people, fat people, and any other vulnerable part of society. They were upset and released years of pent up frustration.



A similar frustration exists in the Green Industry. It is caused by the excessive attention poured over lawn care operators and golf course superintendents by suppliers and the news media while other Green Industry professions go unrecognized.

Refusing to accept a lesser position in the industry, smaller and older Green Industries are starting to fight back.

Without the emotional stimulation of a song, smaller industry associations are regrouping to restore their rightful share of recognition amongst all Green Industries.

The list of examples is long. The American Sod Producers Association hired a full-time, experienced executive director, Doug Fender, and immediately started an image-building campaign. The Professional Grounds Management Society has made Allan Shulder's part-time position a full-time one and the PGMS board's primary goal is more attention for their programs and show. The Sports Turf Managers' Association has just separated from its former management firm and its board selected image-building and show as key objectives. The Associated Landscape Contractors of America has stepped up its maintenance programs to show the landscape world there was landscape maintenance before the term lawn care was ever coined.

There is a solution to the image problem of smaller associations, one where the individual associations can preserve their identity but still take advantage of a larger show, more attention from manufacturers, and perhaps bigger budget educational programs.

It is a joint conference. Instead of 200 people attending separate shows, 3,000 will attend a joint conference. Instead of 35 small booths, there will be 200 exhibitors with their big booths. Instead of speakers from a limited area, there will be experts from across the country.

This can be done without small associations losing their identity in a big crowd. In fact, small associations can still have small meetings if they want, but once a year put their muscle together with other allied associations for a major event.

Such an event will become reality within the next 18 months. Mark my word.

Bruce F. Shank, executive editor

WT&T Editorial Advisory Board



Douglas Chapman
Horticulturist
Dow Gardens
Midland, Michigan



Kent Kurtz
Professor
Horticulture
Cal Poly - Pomona



Harry Niemczyk
Professor, Turfgrass
Entomology
Ohio State University
Wooster, Ohio



Roger Funk
Vice President
Davey Tree
Expert Co.
Kent, Ohio