



Lee Martin's responsibilities include maintaining this view of the Japanese garden at the Carter Presidential Center.

LANDSCAPE MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Morris Lee Martin of Alfred L. Simpson & Co. believes education, higher pay scales and industry organizations can help solve Atlanta's workforce problems.

When we called to congratulate Lee Martin of Alfred L. Simpson & Co. for winning this year's Landscape Manager of the Year award, a light rain was falling in Atlanta. But rather than sit and watch the grass grow, Martin was entrenched in a weekly staff meeting. At these times, he and the company's other four division managers take care of business and solve the problems that get in the way of award-winning progress.

Martin is vice president of the company's Landscape Maintenance Division. As such, he is responsible for 182 acres of turf, 65 acres of shrubs and 10,000 square feet of bedding plants and floral displays. These include

such prestigious clients as the Carter Presidential Center and Library; the Business Center of the Northwoods; and One Atlantic Center, site of the IBM Tower.

Unparalleled growth

Martin joined Alfred L. Simpson & Co. 15 years ago. The company has since grown from 15 to more than 120 employees. In the last five years, according to operations manager James Brisky, Martin has taken his department's gross sales from \$560,000 to \$1.35 million. His goal is \$3 million.

"He has directed this steady growth," says Brisky, "while improving the department's quality and the percentage of its profits, as well as its

reputation in a highly competitive market.

"In addition to the technical care," Brisky notes, "Martin schedules all work, and meets with clients when necessary to insure high quality work and client satisfaction."

Brisky calls Martin a real innovator, and says one of his most important ideas has been in the delegation of day-to-day authority and responsibility to a highly-qualified management team.

"Lee started initiating this structural change around 1981," says Brisky, "and has modified it constantly over the years."

"The people on my staff deserve much of the credit," says Martin.

Martin: "Work with people...to create situations where everybody wins."



One Atlantic Center is the site of lunchtime crowds and summer concerts, and therefore requires extra care and attention.

Brisky, Garry Agan, Boyd Russell and all of his 55-person staff "do a lot of things that go beyond the call of duty, and Mr. Simpson is more like a father to me than an employer."

Branch offices help

Martin has helped to direct company growth by adding and reorganizing resources to meet the department's changing needs while keeping work quality high.

"Over the past few years, we had problems in getting our manpower from one side of the city to another," explains Martin. "We elected to evaluate the expense of having two satellite offices. We then started to get in-house jobs like the Carter Center and Northwoods. Now, our area supervisors are a few minutes away from a job. The fast response time makes us more efficient, and there is less wear and tear on the



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trucks, less field costs."

Martin believes the industry's employee shortage—which many predict as inevitable—can be intercepted with a three-pronged attack consisting of education in horticulture in area high schools, higher pay scales and continued involvement from industry organizations, such as ALCA and PGMS, two groups Martin believes have done much for the profession.

"A college education is valuable because of the way it molds a person's way of thinking," says Martin. "Trade schools help give people some technical training to build on as well.

"Experience, however, is the most critical part of a landscape manager's background. He needs experience with people: pleasing clients, encouraging employees to motivate themselves and to work together like a team." **LM**

KEEPING IT GREEN FOR THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE

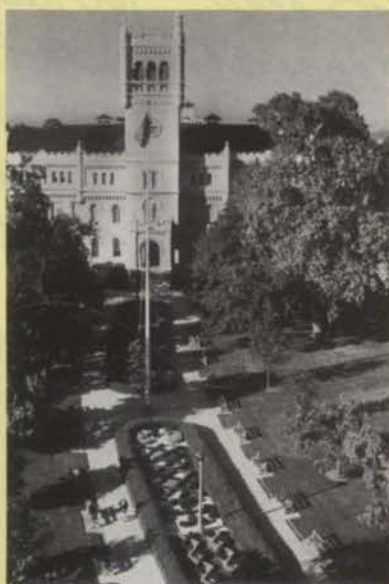
Joseph Paul Barefoot, our runner-up for Landscape Manager of the Year, is chief of grounds maintenance and landscaping for the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home in Washington, D.C. He is responsible for the maintenance of 320 acres, including a new nine-hole golf course.

He also directs both interior and exterior pest control, road and walkway maintenance, transportation around the grounds and vehicle and equipment maintenance.

The 260 acres of landscaped area are divided into two levels of maintenance: 150 acres intensely maintained, 110 nominally maintained.

Barefoot's annual budget is \$1.3 million, but periodic budget cut-backs are not uncommon.

For the past five years, Barefoot has conducted a continuing program of landscape improvements in the domiciliary and health care areas. Generally, \$25-30,000 is spent for landscape materials.



The Knot Garden at the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home.

"We've created many new perennial beds and replaced vast amounts of overgrown shrub-

bery," he says. His crews plant 30,000 perennials each year, and follow a replacement program of replanting three trees for each one that is removed.

"A five-acre plant nursery is maintained where we move damaged materials into for recovery purposes," says Barefoot. "The 50,000 square feet of greenhouses are leased to the Smithsonian Institution, where they grow bedding and display plants and maintain collections for research purposes."

Barefoot earned his bachelor of science degree in agriculture from Penn State. He has done master's work at Penn State, Delaware State and Wisconsin State at River Falls.

Active in grounds management for 25 years, Barefoot was national president of the Professional Grounds Management Society in 1972-73. He has also served as vice president and president of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents.

—Terry McIver □

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