

# HOT TOPICS

## Barefoot to buy more of Lawnmark

■ Barefoot Inc., Worthington, Ohio, says it's going to buy the Lawnmark lawn care businesses in New York, Vermont and Maine. The eight locations, all described as leaders in their particular markets, should finish 1993 with \$8.4 million in revenues.

The sale is expected to close on April 1, 1994.

Marty Erbaugh of Lawnmark, Hudson, Ohio, said several considerations figured into the decision to accept a Barefoot offer. Specifically:

- Improved career opportunities for Lawnmark employees and managers. "We are blessed with a lot of good local and regional management. Barefoot has very strong systems and will provide opportunities for upward mobility for our key people" Erbaugh told LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT.

- Comparable business philosophies. Both companies offer granular lawn care service. Both favor targeted direct mail marketing over telemarketing. Both strongly emphasize customer service and retention, said Erbaugh.

- Barefoot continues to grow, and shows no signs of slowing down. "Barefoot

has got it together. They've got a lot of fine things going on and I see it continuing," says Erbaugh.

Actually, this isn't the first time Barefoot and Lawnmark have dealt.

In January 1992 Barefoot bought Lawnmark operations in Cleveland, Wooster, Akron and Canton.

Through its wholly owned subsidiary Barefoot Grass Lawn Service, Inc., it is now the nation's second largest professional lawn care service company with 1993 sales of about \$90 million, says a company spokesman.

Chief Financial Officer Michael R. Goodrich said Barefoot grew from 315,000 to 432,000 customers system-wide during fiscal 1994. This figure includes the acqui-



Erbaugh: Barefoot, Lawnmark share business philosophies.

sition of Ever-Green Lawns Corporation in January 1993.

"The Ever-Green acquisition has made a significant contribution to 1994's growth," said Goodrich. "However, we continue to address Ever-Green's operating margin as an area for improvement.

"Likewise, the acquisition of Lawnmark should have a positive impact on earnings per share for fiscal 1995. It expands our customer base profitably to an area where Barefoot

currently does not have operations."

Barefoot now operates in 75 metropolitan markets, primarily in the central and eastern U.S. Of these markets, 30 are served by company-owned "branchises," 36 by franchises and 9 by the company.

—Ron Hall

## Homeowners place value on their lawns, study says

INDIANAPOLIS—Homeowners place a high value on the personal values of a lawn, according to a recent study. They place less importance on environmental benefits, however, the study says.

The study, commissioned by DowElanco Specialty Products and conducted by Mar-Quest Research, examined homeowner perceptions and attitudes.

Homeowners identified aesthetics, "curb appeal," resale value and a personal sense of accomplishment or pride as the main benefits derived from maintaining a healthy and weed-free lawn. They said lawns allow them to spend "quality time" with their family, friends and pets.

After further questioning, the homeowners mentioned environmental benefits such as dust control and providing oxygen.

"Lawns are an important part of their lives," says DowElanco director of public affairs Bill Culpepper. "They're willing to devote time and money to ensure their lawns are meticulous, flawless pieces of art."

Most respondents said pesticides were vital to maintaining a thick and healthy lawn. Generally, they accept pesticides and fertilizers, providing they are used properly.

Also, homeowners in the study consider posting a courtesy, but not a necessity.

Culpepper indicates that homeowners who either purchase a lawn care service or apply the products themselves are not overly concerned about posting. On the other hand, consumers who do not purchase these services and products tend to have a greater anxiety about them.

"We need to educate this group on the wide margins of safety that our products provide," Culpepper says. "The average homeowner views posting as the 'friendly, neighborly' thing to do, not as a cause for alarm."

Data was gathered in Columbus, Ohio; Atlanta; Salt Lake City, Utah and Philadelphia.

### ELSEWHERE

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Publications to watch for, page 50

# GREEN INDUSTRY EVENTS

## DECEMBER

**15: Lawn Care Assoc. of Pa. Winter Educational Meeting**, Carlisle, Pa. Phone: LCAP, (717) 236-2050.

**15-16: Oregon Turf & Grounds Maintenance Exhibit**, Oregon Convention Center, Portland. Phone: D.L. Tom Miller, (503) 635-6867.

**17: Pesticide Safety for Landscape Contractors**, New Brunswick, N.J. Phone: Rutgers University, (908) 932-9271.

## JANUARY

**2-7: Advanced Landscape Plant IPM Short Course**, Univ. of Maryland. Phone: David Laughlin, (301) 405-7665.

**3-5: Wisconsin Turfgrass & Green Industry Expo**, Madison, Wis. Phone: (608) 845-6536.

**3-5: Maryland Turfgrass '94**, Baltimore. Phone: Cheryl Gaultney, (410) 335-3700.

**4: Ohio State Perennial School**, Avon, Ohio. Phone: Charles Behnke, (216) 322-0127.

**4-6: Kentucky Landscape Industries Winter Conference & Trade Show**, Lexington Center. Phone: (502) 429-6171 or (812) 284-1042.

**5-7: Turf Management /Park Maintenance Training School**, Albany, N.Y. Phone: Beth Seme, (518) 783-1229.

**7-8: Louisiana Arborist Annual Meeting**, Baton Rouge. Phone: Robert Souvestre, (504) 389-3055.

**8-11: GrowerExpo**, Rosemont, Ill. Phone: (708) 208-9080.

**10-12: Great Lakes Trade Expo**, Grand Rapids, Mich. Phone: Michigan Nursery & Landscape Assn., (517) 487-1282.

**10-12: Eastern Pa. Conference & Trade Show**, Valley Forge. Phone: Scott Guiser, (215) 345-3283.

**10-12: Nebraska Turfgrass Conference**, Omaha. Phone: NTF, (402) 463-5418.

**10-13: Advanced Turfgrass IPM Short Course**, Univ. of Maryland. Phone: Lee Hellman, (301) 405-3920.

**11-13: Eastern Regional Nurserymen's Assn. Annual Conference**, Kiamesha Lake, N.Y. Phone: ERNA, (203) 872-2095.

**11-13: Indiana Arborist Winter Meeting**, Indianapolis. Phone: Lee Huss, (812) 331-6497.

**12-14: Utah Green Conference & Trade Show**, Salt Lake City. Phone: George Hoar, (801) 288-8858.

**12: Sacramento Valley Landscape & Nursery Expo**, Sacramento. Phone: Kenny Kakutani, (916) 442-4470.

**16-18: Empire State Tree Conference**, Suffern, N.Y. Phone: Ray Smith, (518) 783-1322.

**17-18: Arkansas Turfgrass Assn. Trade Show & Conference**, Little Rock. Phone: Angie McSwain, (501) 663-8810.

**17-21: Ohio State Golf Course Maintenance Short Course**, Columbus. Phone: Barbara Bloetscher, (614) 292-7457.

**18-20: Mid-America Green Industry Convention**, Kansas City, Mo. Phone: Olivia Golden, (816) 765-7616.

**19: Professional Turf & Landscape Conference**, White Plains, N.Y. Phone: (914) 636-2875.

## College intern program allied with businesses, looks to future

**PALATINE, Ill.**— The faculty and physical plant department of William Rainey Harper College and local business owners have begun a "Partnership in Education" intern program for Parks and Grounds Management students.

Patricia Bourke, dean of life science and human service, and Robert Getz, director of physical plant at Harper College, say the intern program is a joining of "the academic and practical aspects of grounds management."

Randy Illg is coordinator of the Park and Grounds Management program, and Chuck Gura, supervisor of the Roads and Grounds workforce, established the internship program last summer for current students at the college.

This summer, local firms and services provided more than enough intership positions for interested students as another step forward in the program.

Gura then widened membership in the program to include graduating high

school seniors as a way to learn about both the campus itself, and the Park and Grounds Management program.

The Roads and Grounds/Park and Grounds Management partnership has lately joined with the Biology and Physical Education and Athletics and Recreation departments to form a task force to develop a 20-year campus grounds management program.

Getz leads the task force. Its goal is to evaluate and inventory present land use and recommend a 20-year, ecologically balanced plan.

Getz says the grounds team is looking ahead so that they can provide a healthy environment in the years to come.

"We believe this land may be used without its being destroyed," says Getz.

"We hope, through our partnership, to establish a lasting commitment to the future use of our grounds' resources and continue to be an example for others to emulate."

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**DOT REGULATIONS...**DowElanco offers a free comprehensive guide to help professional applicators comply with the new federal Department of Transportation regulations which took effect Oct. 1st. The guide outlines compliance with HM-181. Another booklet helps comply with HM-126F on training those who work with hazardous materials. For more information, see your DowElanco field rep or phone (800) 352-6776.

**WORKER PROTECTION...**The Florida Nurserymen & Growers Association is now distributing the official 1994 EPA Worker Protection Standard Reference Guide, which outlines the new rules and regulations concerning applying agricultural pesticides. The Standard goes into effect in April, 1994. Guides are \$1.35 each for members, \$1.95 for non-members. Also, "This Water Not For Drinking" tags and chemical re-entry signs are available. Both follow strict EPA guidelines. Water tags are \$5 for 10, 30 cents each additional; re-entry signs are each \$1 for members, \$1.25 for non-members (minimum order is 10). Send your check to: FNGA, 5401 Kirkman

## INFO CENTER

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Rd., Suite 650, Orlando, FL 32819; or phone (407) 345-8137.

**SAFETY TRAINING...**A safety training video on the use of wheel loaders has been released by Video Information System Training Associates (VISTA). The video includes facilitator's manual, participants' manuals and a post-viewing test on the material. For more information, call (800) 942-2886 or write VISTA, P.O. Box 247, Burlington, WI 53105.

**NEW FOR TGIF...**TGIF (Turfgrass Information File), the industry's largest single source of turfgrass information, has added a new listing of members of the American Society of Golf Course Architects. Information from TGIF is available in hard copy or via a modem, and can be searched by author, subject, etc. For

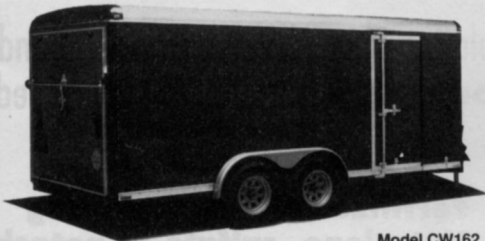
additional information about TGIF, contact Nancy Donati, Medinah Country Club, Medinah Rd., Medinah, IL 60157-9653; (708) 773-1700, ext. 254.

**APPRAISING PLANT WORTH...**The International Society of Arboriculture has released its "Workbook for the Guide for Plant Appraisal," which accompanies the eighth edition of the "Guide for Plant Appraisal." The workbook explains the factors which affect plant value, and gives hints to determine the appropriate ratings. Cost is 50 cents per book. Order from ISA, P.O. Box GG, Savoy, IL 61874.

**FOR HOME LANDSCAPES...**The "Home Landscape Companion," by Edith Henderson, shows how to create a landscape design plan. She explains the principles of landscape design and how to apply them to your particular site. Also offered: valuable information and assistance on subjects ranging from color and texture to fragrance and focal points. With illustrations; 155 pp. Write Peachtree Publishers, 494 Armour Circle NE, Atlanta, GA 30324; or phone (404) 876-8761.

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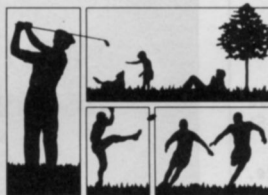
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