

## Busy Bill Clutter pleased with growth in both OLCA, TurfGard

### Successful OLCA swap meet is combined with tour of Scotts facilities.

■ "Some of us sold a lot. Some of us didn't sell much. It just depends on what you're selling," says Bill Clutter, TurfGard Company, Dayton, Ohio.

Clutter, president of the Ohio Lawn Care Association, sold five used, walk-behind spreaders, three coils of used and new hose, and bartered an aerator for a small trailerload of granular fertilizer at OLCA's first-ever summer swap this past August.

In all, 15 lawn/landscape companies brought surplus tools and equipment to The Scotts Company picnic grounds in

Marysville, Ohio. Clutter says between 85-100 lawn and landscape pros attended the swap meet. About 50 lawn pros toured the Scotts' compost and fertilizer manufacturing facilities earlier that day. (Lunch was on Scotts too.)

"For a first-time affair, I'm very pleased with the turnout," says Clutter, president of TurfGard, Dayton, Ohio.

Clutter, a powerfully built, methodical man with a ready grin, has reason to be pleased. The OLCA has grown to more than 350 members in just three years.

Clutter says many factors contribute to OLCA's popularity but three stand out:

- Volunteers like past president Phil Forgarty and other committee members. "I certainly can't take credit for what so many have contributed to," he says.



TurfGard's Bill Clutter credits OLCA growth to strong committees, valuable member services, affordable dues.

- Affordable dues. "Thanks to some of the industry suppliers, we've put together a welcome packet whose value exceeds the cost of membership," Clutter points out.

- Responding to what members want. "A lot of our members have cross-over businesses. One of our goals is to offer services to our members that sometimes extend beyond basic lawn care," he explains.

Clutter credits TurfGard employees,



## Some tools require a lot of time and manpower ..





Left to right: Troy Boucher, Scott Hurler, Steve Bailey and Jay D'Amico give this Ryan overseeder a thorough workout.

headed by operations manager Mike Young, for allowing him time to be OLCA's leader.

It's a busy company, and it's having a "good year," says Clutter. This past season TurfGard began offering tree & shrub service. He says next spring it will open a "mechanical services" division offering aerations, seeding, and commercial mowing.

TurfGard, Dayton, Ohio, is a consolidation of five companies, the company Clutter started in the mid 1970s and four other smaller companies he's purchased and incorporated since.

Dayton, (pop. 190,000) in southwest Ohio, is an intense lawn care market. Clutter says he can name a dozen major competitors. "There are so many small competitors and their names change so often I just can't keep up," he says. It was this intense competition from cost-cutting competitors that prompted Clutter to start his own separate low-cost lawn care company several years ago, an operation separate from his "high-end" TurfGard.



Les Richendollar, left, and Troy Thomas of Plantscape, Urbana, Ohio dicker with Tom Burton, right, Burton's Landscape, Troy, over this used spray rig.

He's been backing away from that move though. He discovered that even though some customers will only pay minimum prices for lawn care, they still expect maximum service. "It's just not the way to go," says Clutter.

Clutter feels TurfGard "is probably exactly where it should be." By next spring, with the startup of the mechanical services division, he expects to employ about 25.

—Ron Hall

**Roundup® herbicide is the ideal management tool when budgets are tight or manpower is limited.**

You can cover more ground in the same amount of time it would take using mechanical methods or pulling weeds by hand.

Better yet, Roundup gives you long-lasting control. So crews don't have to keep coming back. You'll be able to allot more manpower to other jobs and save wear and tear on equipment—getting the most out of your budget.

If you're not already using Roundup, don't waste another minute. Ask for our FREE brochure telling how Roundup combines ecology and economy.

Call: 1-800-332-3111. **LOWEST PRICE EVER**



.....Some don't.