

## LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

is a proud member of these  
green industry professional  
organizations:



Associated Landscape Contractors of America, 12200 Sunrise Valley Dr., Suite 150, Reston, VA; (703) 620-6363.

American Association of Nurserymen (National Landscape Association), 1250 I St. NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 789-2900.

Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, 1421 Research Park Dr., Lawrence, KS 66049-3859; (913) 841-2240.

International Society of Arboriculture, P.O. Box 908, Urbana, IL 61801; (217) 328-2032.

International Turfgrass Society, Crop & Soil Environmental Sciences, VPI-SU, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0403; (703) 231-9796.



National Arborist Association, The Meeting Place Mall, P.O. Box 1094, Amherst, NH 03031-1094; (603) 673-3311.

National Golf Foundation, 1150 South U.S. Highway One, Jupiter, FL 33477; (407) 744-6006.

Ohio Turfgrass Foundation, 2021 Coffey Rd., Columbus, OH 43210; (614) 292-2601.



Professional Grounds Management Society, 120 Cockeysville Rd., Suite 104, Hunt Valley, MD 21103; (410) 584-9754.



Professional Lawn Care Association of America, 1000 Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, Suite C-135, Marietta, GA 30068-2112; (404) 977-5222.

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment, 1155 15th St. NW, Suite 900, Washington, D.C. 20005; (202) 872-3860.



Sports Turf Managers Association, 401 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611-4267; (312) 644-6610.

Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association, 421 West Travelers Trail, Burnsville, MN 55337; (612) 894-2414.

## AS WE SEE IT

TERRY McIVER, MANAGING EDITOR



### Never mind sand traps: beware golf's status trap

We received a call from a superintendent who's been looking for a new job. He's currently employed, but seeks another opportunity.

This well-spoken, 40-year-old college graduate is certified by the GCSAA and has more than 10 years of solid Class A golf course experience.

But he suspects he's been compromised by the very thing we all agree is a lousy strategy: price shopping.

He wonders if, at his still-young age, he's being passed up for younger men who don't require as high a salary. He also wonders if he's become caught up in the "it's-not-what-you-know-it's-who-you-know" syndrome.

Maybe he just doesn't interview well, but let's hope the golf course hiring process doesn't mandate membership in a club that only offers opportunities based on youth, low income requirements or fraternity.

Employers should be willing to pay for a person's experience and certification. There's no point in being "the best you can be" and "pursuing excellence" if the gatekeepers won't then pay you what you're worth.

Our caller also said something that makes us wonder how green industry employers are handling interviews.

He said he drove for four hours to get to one particular interview. When he arrived, he walked into a room full of nine other applicants! He managed to get 40 minutes of interview time, but the third question he was asked was, "How much will you work for?"

Tacky. *Very* tacky. At least he wasn't asked his marital status or age, which is probably happening more often than not, if the truth were known.

Maybe the interviewer at that course is just one of a few who have poor interview etiquette, but let's remember to practice

what is preached in the pages of our professional magazines and from trade show podiums:

**1)** The interview is a two-way street; both parties deserve respect.

**2)** Don't believe all you hear about "doing more with less." Many service businesses have fallen for that line and are paying for it with inefficient crews and frustrated customers who don't come back.

**3)** Don't shop for price! It doesn't work when you buy equipment, and it's certainly a lousy strategy when you're looking for good employees. The reality of it all is that salaries are the most important items in the budget.

We recently wrote about the importance of business savvy to the modern superintendent—but don't take it too seriously. Being able to manage money is important, but don't discount the value of human potential. Anyone can learn how to do "zero-based" budgets and capital equipment appreciation and evaluation.

You've heard it before: "How am I going to acquire any experience if I'm not given a chance?"

And if you, Mr. Employer, want to hire someone "who can do it yesterday"—to coin that hip phrase used to describe "fast-paced, ever-changing job environments," then you're doing a poorly-planned and rushed job of hiring.

Turfgrass knowledge, individual talent and past experience can all be measured in dollars and cents.

If you plan to hire someone, take the time to measure accurately and fairly.