

PEOPLE OF THE YEAR

Thirteen years ago we announced our first "Lawn Care Person of the Year" recipient, and made a special presentation at the PLCAA Conference. We've made a selection every year since. The list reads like a "Who's Who" in lawn care.

This year we've broadened our scope to include "Person of the Year" award winners in landscape, professional grounds care, and golf. We think this change reflects the growing cooperation among green industry groups such as PLCAA, ALCA and PGMS. These three professional associations combine their efforts in the sixth annual Green Industry Expo in Cincinnati this month. See you there.

The 1996 "People of the Year" are:

LAWN CARE CATEGORY

Daryle L. Johnson, President of All American Turf Beauty, Van Meter, Iowa

The videotape showed a Daryle Johnson that nobody had ever seen before and will never see again. It showed Johnson in the lead role as a thoughtless, careless applicator. A dirtball. He played it strictly for laughs. He wanted to demonstrate how not to act as a professional applicator. He played the video as part of a larger program at last year's PLCAA Conference in Ft Worth.

Let it be written here first—Daryle Johnson will not be considered for an Oscar as a result of that work.

But he is LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT magazine's 1997 Lawn Care "Person of the Year."

Daryle Johnson's career highlights

- ▶ 1976: he and wife Linda start All American Turf Beauty
- ▶ 1980s: helps found Iowa Professional Lawn Care Association (IPLCA)
- ▶ 1980s: helps found Iowa Alliance of Environmental Concerns
- ▶ 1989: receives IPLCA Distinguished Service Award
- ▶ 1990: helps organize fight to prevent unfair anti-pesticide laws in Iowa
- ▶ Early 1990s: serves on PLCAA board (3 years); GIE board member (2 years)
- ▶ 1994: receives Iowa Turfgrass Institute Meritorious Service Award



Daryle Johnson, 20 years after co-founding All American Turf Beauty with his wife, Linda, remains one of the application industry's biggest boosters both in Iowa, his native state, and nationally. Not by words, but by actions over almost two decades.

In 1976 Daryle and Linda incorporated All American Turf Beauty, Van Meter, Iowa. Johnson was the only full time employee and handled both sales and production for the first two seasons. In 1976 he also became a manufacturer's representative for The Andersons Lawn Group. (His company still works closely with The Anderson as its sales rep west of the Mississippi.)

That first year in business was a tough one for the Johnsons. They ended the season with just 95 customers. Business increased the second season to 400 customers, and more than doubled again in 1978 when the Johnsons opened their second branch in Ames, Iowa. Several years later they staffed a Waterloo location.

All American Turf Beauty added commercial services in 1989 for large turf areas, and, in 1990, further diversified by adding irrigation design, installation and maintenance.

All American Turf Beauty continues to

grow, although at a slower pace, and the Johnsons have prepared it for the future by amending its Employee 401(K) Profit Sharing Plan, several years ago, to an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) so that it gradually becomes owned by its employees.

Local, national leader

Johnson's contributions to Iowa turfgrass have been considerable. He helped found and also served as president of both the Iowa Professional Lawn Care Association and the Iowa Alliance of Environmental Concerns. He's also the 1996 president of the Iowa Turfgrass Institute. He continues as a trustee for both IPLCA and the Iowa Alliance.

On the legislative front Johnson helped organize the fight to prevent restrictive anti-pesticide laws in Iowa, and worked on the industry committee to eliminate the use tax on lawn fertilizer and chemicals there.

As a member of the PLCAA board, Johnson served as Conference Chairman and as a GIE board member and secretary.

Johnson's friendly, reasoned approach to problem solving has served his company and the lawn care industry well. The best news is that he's still contributing.

GROUNDS CATEGORY

Thomas Smith, senior vice president of the Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum, Cincinnati, Ohio

The booming voice of Tom Smith has been heard during many green industry events, as a seminar moderator and as instructor. A true champion and standard bearer of the grounds management profession, Smith is always willing to share what he knows with his peers, and he never fails

Tom Smith's career highlights

- ▶ 1970: MS degree in Forest Science, Yale University
- ▶ 1972: begins career at Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum
- ▶ 1987: named Spring Grove's vice president of operations
- ▶ 1995: receives PGMS "President's Award"
- ▶ Has served on the board of Directors, Urban Forestry Dept., Univ. of Cincinnati
- ▶ Current president of PGMS' Cincinnati chapter



Evening College; Northern Kentucky University and Cincinnati Technical College.

He enjoys his work

"I love what I do," exclaims Smith. "I'm excited about it. I love to come to work"

Smith is a former president of the Professional Grounds Maintenance Society—now in its 85th year—and currently leads its Cincinnati chapter.

"He is an unassailable, good choice," says PGMS Executive Director John Gillan.

"He is absolutely PGMS's most active member in terms of speaking about PGMS to other groups."

Smith received the PGMS President's

to take advantage of opportunities to learn from others.

"I've enjoyed sharing over the years," says Smith, *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT*'s "Person of the Year" in the Grounds Care Category. "It's part of what makes this the best industry in America. It's fun to see people grow and become part of it."

Smith's strength lies in his appreciation of horticulture, and the realization of the importance of horticulture to people.

Smith has been associated with Spring Grove since 1964, when he worked there as a student. He holds a degree in botany from the University of Cincinnati, and a masters in forest science from Yale University, home of the nation's oldest forestry school.

Beyond his many presentations at industry events, Smith's efforts include teaching others in a classroom setting.

Since 1973, Smith has taught horticulture courses at the University of Cincinnati

Award in 1995. "He is a mentor, by birth," says Gillan. "He does that with everybody. He talks about the green industry to anyone who will listen."

LANDSCAPE CATEGORY

Ronald Kujawa, CCLP, president and CEO, of Kujawa Enterprises, Inc. Cudahy, WI

Ron Kujawa and his wife Sally have been running KEI since 1969, when they took to running the business started by Ron's father and uncle. An equipment sales business was added in 1974.

Our 1996 "Person of the Year" in the Landscape Contractor Category, Ron Kujawa has always been willing to do what he can to help the landscaping industry grow and prosper in terms of its professionalism and service to customers.

Kujawa served as president of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America in 1989, and was also instrumental in forming the association's Landscape Management Division in the early 1980s.

"Ron is one of the most sharing people I've ever met, and one of the most visionary," says Debra Atkins, executive director of ALCA. "He comes up with ideas people tend to shy away from for awhile; but they implement them sooner or later. He plants the seeds for many ideas."

One of Kujawa's major industry contributions were his efforts to establish the Green Industry Expo, which brought ALCA, PGMS and PLCAA together for a common trade show. "He was one of the 'Founding Fathers,' the champion behind GIE," says Atkins, "and he has also served as GIE president."

"He knew that GIE was a good thing for the industry," adds ALCA President David Minor, of Minor's Landscape Services, Fort Worth, Texas. "He was very passionate about it, and convinced us all that it was a good thing to do. He pretty much single-handedly made it happen on ALCA's part.

"I admire Ron as much as anybody in this industry," adds Minor. "When I need an honest, straight forward opinion, Ron is the man I ask."

In 1995, Kujawa was awarded the ALCA "Landscape Service Award," for his service, commitment and contribution to the association and the green industry.

Kujawa is a member ALCA's legislative committee, and will also participate in the association's strategic planning meetings.

"Ron is very good at helping set ALCA's road map," says Atkins. "Many people have ideas, but not everyone can or will help."

Kujawa currently serves as chairman of ALCA's associate member committee, which represents its supplier members.

Customers as partners

Kujawa's business success is based on his relationships with customers. KEI offers full service and top-to-bottom efficiency for each of its commercial and municipal

Ron Kujawa's career highlights

- ▶ Marquette University graduate, 1953.
- ▶ 1969: Ron and wife Sally take charge of family business.
- ▶ Early 1980: helps form ALCA's Landscape Management Division
- ▶ 1989: president of ALCA.
- ▶ 1990: instrumental in launch of Green Industry Expo.
- ▶ 1995: receives ALCA "Landscape Service Award."
- ▶ Currently chairs ALCA's associate member committee.



clients.

"You have to be able to sit down and establish a good relationship with customers," says Kujawa. "which means two things have to happen: they should like you and trust you, and you have to like and trust them!"

"You really *can* become a 'partner' with your clients, but only with mutual trust and a willingness to talk.

"There are lot of business relationships that are very formal, and that's not necessarily bad; it can be formal as long as it's not a sterile relationship. You have to be able to talk to people."

GOLF CATEGORY

James Snow, executive director of the USGA Green Section, Far Hills, N.J.

Jim Snow, LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT's "Person of the Year" in the Golf Category, has been with the United States Golf Association's Green Section for 20 years, and has helped to define and deal with many of the agronomic and environmental concerns that have grown as much as the game of golf itself. He has served as the Green Section's national director for six years.

Snow's tenure with the Green Section has coincided with a time of great advancements in golf course design, construction and maintenance and environmental stewardship.

"In 1982, we became committed to expanding research into areas of water management," says Snow, "dealing with such is-

suas as drought stress and disease pressure on turf, and the way water was being used."

A three year program from 1991-93 studied the effects of pesticides and fertilizers on the environment, pesticide leaching and runoff, and golfer and wildlife exposure to control products.

Audubon a highlight

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program is perhaps Snow's most lasting contribution to the green industry. He and

"Compared to early 1990s, after having done all the research, and having established the Audubon Cooperative Program, the industry isn't being criticized as much as it was," observes Snow. "A lot more people are giving the industry the benefit of the doubt.

"I know some superintendents get tired of hearing about it, but any super who has taken their course through full certification in the Audubon deserves a lot of credit."

Industry stewardship must continue. "As the population grows, and resources become more limited," predicts Snow, "stewardship can't help but become more important."

Revising the specs

The Green Section is further micro-managing the agronomic needs of the various regions of the country.

"We need to refine and regionalize greens construction specs," says Snow. "Intuitively, it doesn't make sense for one

Jim Snow's career highlights

- ▶ 1979: completes graduate studies at Cornell University, joins Green Section as agronomist for Northeastern region.
- ▶ 1982: Green Section expands water management research.
- ▶ 1991-93: study of the effects of pesticides and fertilizers on the environment, pesticide leaching and runoff, and golfer and wildlife exposure to control products.
- ▶ 1990: named director of the Green Section. Helps begin Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program.
- ▶ 1998: a new five year program will delve further into environmental and turfgrass research.
- ▶ Editor, *USGA Green Section Record*, with regular reports on golf course agronomic issues from around the U.S.



Ron Dodson of the National Audubon Society started the program in 1990, and more than 2000 golf course superintendents have since come on board to improve the environmental friendliness of their golf courses.

The results of the program are evident, environmentally and in the court of public opinion.

method of green construction to be used all over the world."

"We have a great staff of agronomists," says Snow. "They do their jobs well, and I couldn't do it without them." **LM**

—by Terry McIver and Ron Hall