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The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) is a stable, well-run organization, but it has some tough decisions to make.

Tops on the list is finding a new fulltime leader. Then there's the need to begin growing again. Also, is it in PLCAA's best interest, or of the green industry itself, for PLCAA to continue to manage the Green Industry Expo?

The GIE is a partnership among PLCAA, the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA), and the Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS).

PLCAA has managed it since its inception about seven years ago. GIE has, with a few glitches, worked very well. It's been a good deal for just about everybody in the industry. Suppliers show their wares to a wider audience. Show attendees get to pick and choose among the three group's educational offerings.

In conjunction with the show, each association conducts its own conference with its own annual meetings, award ceremonies and educational sessions. Each association retains a measure of autonomy which is the way it should be. This year's GIE is in Charlotte, NC, in November and cooperation among participating associations remains strong. Indications point to a strong 1997 GIE.

I'm glad. It's to the green industry's best interest that the three organizations continue to cooperate for the GIE; the only question is, who should manage it?

As for PLCAA's new leader, what seemed like a done deal, the hiring of Rex Boynton to manage the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA), didn't happen.

The executive director of the Picture Framing Association for the past six years, really impressed the PLCAA Search Committee, but Boynton

took another job in Richmond, VA, where he and his family live. Because the Boyntons have school-age children, they apparently decided against packing up and moving. PLCAA is headquartered in Marietta, GA.

PLCAA has been without a fulltime executive director since Ann McClure left in mid spring. She departed leaving the Association in solid financial shape and with an able staff. Overall, she was an excellent manager and administrator.

But, neither she nor the PLCAA board members over the past decade have been able to grow the organization much beyond its 1000 or so members. Back in the mid 1980s it looked like the Association would reach 2,000 members. It didn't happen. PLCAA, although it's had some success in starting regional allied associations, seems to be on membership cruise control.

PLCAA will probably have to rethink its dues structure to put some zip back into its membership effort. It should more vigorously court the small mowing and maintenance firms too. I think it has a lot it could offer this segment of the industry.

One thing for sure, PLCAA's next executive director won't be able to just come in and keep the wheels turning. That person is going to have to have to make things happen. And soon too. **LM**

Next PLCAA leader will need to jump right in



Ron Hall
RON HALL
 Managing Editor