

# THE LM 1000



*Golf course/grounds facility selections based on design features, reputation and accessibility.*

*Landscape/lawn care selections chosen for regional and/or national reputation, longevity, accessibility and uniqueness.*

*We could have included at least another hundred professionals in this feature. Nonetheless, we hope you find this special feature to be informative, entertaining and useful. —The editors*

*Shown clockwise from top right: Dallas Athletic Club; Dennis' Seven Dees employees; Beatrice CC; Lambeau Field.*



## Green industry greats!

*They work hard. They're successful.*

*They keep their customers happy. They*

*love what they do. Meet our 1997 class*

*of select green industry professionals*

*who set standards of excellence.*

compiled by Ron Hall, Terry McIver and Jim Guyette

## GOLF COURSES

### Arrowhead Country Club North Canton, Ohio

Superintendent Daryl Decker helps his employees, particularly seasonal workers, balance work with their personal lives at this excellently maintained course. Improvements to Arrowhead include terraced tees, a wildflower garden that also provides some flood control, and several ornamental ponds.

### Baltusrol Golf Club Springfield, NJ

A.W. Tillinghast designed and built the course on land once



owned by a farmer named Baltus Rol. The U.S. Open was here in 1993. Superintendents in charge are Joseph Flaherty, CGCS and Steven Wirth.

### Beatrice Country Club Beatrice, NB

Shown at left, Beatrice was the state's first Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary course. It's managed by Casey Crittenden, CGCS, who is assisted by Darrin Fuser. This summer the course hosted The Nebraska Cup, The Prairie Golf Tour, a U.S. Open qualifier, men's and women's state amateur tournaments, and the State Senior Golf Tournament. "We do a variety of native grasslands seedings, but for the most part we let nature do what it needs to do," says Crittenden. He thanks Bill Love, the golf course architect and H&H Golf, the course contractors, for establishing areas around the course for wildlife.

### Cog Hill Golf Club Lemont, IL

Site of the 1996 "Beat the Nun" contest (a popular publicity stunt), Cog Hill this year hosts the U.S. Amateur and Western Open. Superintendent Kenneth Lapp has man-



aged the four courses there for 25 years, and oversees 70-75 crewmen. Distinctive features of the No. 4 course—designed by Dick Wilson and Joe Lee—are 109 traps that surround the moderately contoured Pennncross/*poa annua* greens. One green is guarded by six bunkers (shown above). "When the tournament comes around, everybody swings in," says Lapp.

### The Country Club Pepper Pike, OH

William Flynn designed and built the golf course, which was com-



pleted in 1926. Lately, Mike Hurdzan has helped relocate some tees, re-contour some fairways and rebuild bunkers. Superintendent Matt Shaffer, (shown) likes to

have really fast fairways (seven feet on the stimp) and short, close-cut tees. "And we keep our roughs real close," adds Shaffer. New irrigation is planned for 1999, and the driving range is to be redone.

### The Country Club of Colorado Colorado Springs, CO

Designed by Pete Dye in 1972, the course is managed by superintendent/author Stan Metsker, CGCS, author of *On the Course: The Life and Times of a Golf Course Superintendent*. The club features mostly native plants: cottonwood, willow, hawthorn, American plum, chokecherry and currents in the valley. "To be successful in this business, a superintendent needs to surround himself with good people and listen to what they say," Metsker says.

cont. on page 24

# THE LM 100

## The Country Club of Mobile Mobile, AL

Ron Wright, CGCS, manages this Donald Ross/Willard Byrd-designed course. He has a staff of 18



full time employees. Summer's been tough: 24-inches of rain from Hurricane Danny. "You do the best you can with it," says Wright. The club was first located on Mobile bay in 1899. After hurricanes in 1906 and 1910, a new site was found. "It's a somewhat tight course," says Wright, "and pin placement can make a hole play completely different." The course turns 100 in 1998.

## Coyote Hills Golf Course Fullerton, CA

Cal Olson designed this course to co-exist with a functioning 250-acre Unocal oil field. Thirty-five operating oil wells are disguised and the pipelines are hidden below the turf. Even so, coyotes wander alongside rare birds such as the cactus wren and California gnatcatcher. Says superintendent Scott Bourgeois (shown), "Unocal's been pumping oil out of here for many years, and we just have to work around them." The course opened for play in 1996.



## Dallas Athletic Club Dallas, TX

The father-son team of Clyde and Kevin Nettles have managed this course for a combined 39 years. Designed by Ralph Plummer and revised by Jack Nicklaus, the course has 419 bermudagrass tees, fairways and roughs, and Penncross greens. To prepare for the U.S. Mid-

Amateur tourney here in October, the Nettles and 44 employees redid a practice facility and spiffed up water features. How does Kevin like working with his dad? "We're all out here for the same purpose, to make the best golf course we can. We love the outdoors and the agronomics," says Kevin

## Deer Track Golf Club Crawfordsville, IN

Scott Gobel (shown) manages 8 to 9 fulltimers in summer. New cart paths are going in during September. Deer Track is seven years old, and was designed by Dave Sheets. Features include hilly, wooded terrain and an island green for the par 4 18th. "I know whether I'm doing something right or wrong by how everything looks," says Gobel.



## Grand Traverse Resort Acme, MI

The Grand Traverse Resort features golf at The Bear Course, designed by Jack Nicklaus; Spruce Run, the original course, and will soon feature courses by Gary Player and Lee Trevino. Mike Meindertsma (shown) is director of golf. John Meyer manages the grounds. Doug Kendzierski is superintendent at The Bear course, James Bluck II is superintendent at Spruce Run. GTR is a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary.



## Indian River Club Vero Beach, FL

This 300-acre club located on Florida's east coast opened in February 1995, and earned Audubon Signature Sanctuary in 1996. Just 85 acres of turfgrass cover the golf course which also contains 50 acres of lakes, marshes and wetlands. The golf course retains much of its na-

tive Florida personality while providing club members and guests with excellent playing conditions. Florid-



ian Robert Ellis is superintendent. He's assisted by Jeff Rennert and a staff of 13.

## The Links at Spanish Bay Pebble Beach, CA

This course turned 10 this year. More than 500,000 cubic yards of sand was brought on site to create bunkers, bumps and acres of towering dunes on a worked out quarry. Known for its punchbowl greens. Golfers can see the Pacific Ocean on almost every hole. A new irrigation system is in the works. Fescue fairways could return.

## The Lodge at Koele The Experience at Koele Lana'i, HI

Voted the best golf resort for the second year in a row by *Condé Nast Traveler*. Towering pines and eucalyptus line the Experience at



Koele, designed by Greg Norman and Ted Robinson. The signature #8

hole drops more than 250 feet to the fairway.

Photo by Jeffrey Asher

## Maroon Creek Club Aspen, CO

Third place for "Best Course in Colorado" competition went to this Audubon Sanctuary course, and Golf Digest called it third "Best New Private Course" in the state. Superintendent Bill Hamilton is in charge. The course was designed by Tom Fazio to amplify the natural surroundings that are very much a part of the game.

## New Albany Country Club New Albany, OH

The 5,000 acres that encompass this country club outside of Columbus include 600 homes and complete sports and fitness facilities. "It's a very well planned development," says superintendent Tony Mancuso. The 27-hole golf course has been



open for five years. "After a round of golf you can come over and get a massage, get a haircut and get your nails done." The entire complex shows a lot of polish, especially the croquet court. "It's basically built like a putting green," he says. "It's not the croquet that we play in our backyards."

## Olde Florida Golf Club Naples, FL

Olde Florida is a 1995 winner in the GCSAA Environmental Steward Awards. Darren J. Davis is its progressive superintendent. The course opened for play in 1994. Initiatives include lightning protection for many key trees, nesting boxes and wildlife corridors between all golf holes. Davis—with Dr. Wayne Hanna of USDA—is also testing of 'ultradwarf' bermudagrasses on a

test green at Olde Florida. Davis runs a great intern program, and hires fulltime help only from the intern ranks.

**Olympia Fields Country Club  
Olympia Fields, IL**

This private course hosted The Senior Open in June. Despite a cool spring, the North Course was ready for play. "As a superintendent, you spend several years agonizing about all the things that could go wrong," says David Ward. "We worked really hard leading up to it, and during the tournament, everything that could possibly go right, went right!" Ward (below left) and part-



ner Kevin West, (right) have worked at the 36-hole course for eight years. An Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary course, Olympia Fields features Penncross/*poa annua* greens; and many trees and ornamental grasses; numerous perennial beds and prairie restoration projects. Designed by the legendary Willie Park, Jr., it was the biggest golf facility in the world prior to WWII.

**Prestonwood Country Club  
Cary, NC**

Golf director Ron Gilmore and veteran superintendent John Hinkle head an exceptional team that cares for 54 holes of golf, two practice



greens and a one-acre practice tee. This club has really taken off since being bought by software magnate James Goodnight Ph.D. (SAS Corporation), and its three golf courses get better and better. Prestonwood CC hosts a Nike Tour event annually. This staff helped design its own maintenance building two years ago, one of the best in golf.

**Portland Country Club  
Portland, ME**

The Portland Country Club is the first in The Bay State to be recognized as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. Superintendent J.B. Christie praises former super Patrick Lewis for charting "the right course for the future." The club's membership, community volunteers and crew members worked hard for the honor. Christie urges other supers to get involved: "This program will work for you."



**Sanctuary, Sedalia, CO**

This course was carved out of the foothills south of Denver. It's surrounded by thousands of acres of parkland and open space. No homes surround this course—and never will, say its developer.

Jim Engh designed the course, and David Hare is superintendent. A golfer is just as likely to see a black bear or a golden eagle as another golfer at Sanctuary.

**Saxon Golf Course  
Saxonburg, PA**

Frank Ekas founded this course in 1958. It has 27 holes. In 1985 neighbors and players helped clean up after a tornado twisted and smashed more than 150 trees at the 260-acre facility. The tornado, as it turned out, cleared enough land to build another nine holes. A war-hero bomber pilot (36 missions over Germany) and machinist, Ekas used his skills to redesign and invent equipment such as a riding greens mower, a greens spiker and top-dressing brushes. He operates this privately owned public course with

his son, Frank Ekas, Jr.

**The Summit Country Club  
Owensboro, KY**

This 400-acre semi-private golf course and housing development is Kentucky's first certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary course. "It took a couple of years, but it wasn't as difficult as I thought it would be—I assigned it to my assistant," quips superintendent John Delker, referring to Kevin Glover, who prepared the rolling countryside setting



Bourne is director of parks and rec for the county.

(shown above) for the certification procedure. "The bonus to this diligent work is that it has enhanced the natural beauty that is so prevalent at The Summit," says Delker.

**Sunset Hills Country Club  
Edwardsville, IL**

Challenges abound here. Superintendent Bob Ajemian deals with the transitional zone—cool-season fairways and warm-season greens. Members of this 18-hole private club also must be at the top of their skills. "We've got a lot of blind holes here," says Ajemian, "and it's a tough course to play because of the slope." Ajemian is overseeing seven holes of reconstruction.

**The Timbers at Troy  
Howard County, MD**

This year-old golf course is built on 206 acres of land granted to the Dorsey family by Lord Baltimore in 1664. The property later became known as Troy Hill. The course features undulating fairways, mature trees, meandering streams, and finely-raked bunkers. Greg Rosenthal is the super. Rainmaker Golf Development developed the course, Ken Killian designed it, it's operated by Kemper Sports Management and owned by Howard County. Jeff

**GROUNDS & ATHLETIC FIELDS**

**Brooks Army Medical Hospital, San Antonio, TX**

A lot of attention is required when working for the military, and the crews from GreenGrass in San Antonio stand tall when policing this world-famous 110-acre facility. "This is an exciting project," says Frank Suarez, president of GreenGrass. "The hospital has multiple open-air atriums, and there are a lot of logistics involved with this." Because Brooks is a hospital, GreenGrass has to take special care. And it does, while keeping the grounds exceptional

**Cedarville College  
Cedarville, OH**

Paul Ware is the head groundskeeper at this Baptist school of 2,500 students in southwest Ohio. "Most of our crew is made up of students," says Ware, now in his 20th year at Cedarville. "The students are smart and they do a good job. Landscaping at the college is excellent, along with its maintenance."



**City of Litchfield Park, Arizona**

This Phoenix suburb stands out among others in the desert because

# THE LM 100

of its greenery. Public Works Director Bob Gaunt's horticultural background shows in this city that was founded by Goodyear Tire and Rubber in 1916. Orange and palm trees, plus 23 acres of turf, grace this city of 38,000. The city devotes eight employees to its landscaping operation, and each employee is sure to receive extensive landscape training.

## College of Wooster Wooster, Ohio

About 1,500 students enjoy a jewel of a campus thanks to grounds superintendent Phil Williams and his fine staff. Williams gives his nine-member staff the green light to add special touches to the campus. For example, several years ago staffers ringed the outside of the college baseball field outfield fence with a display of flowers, ornamental grasses and small trees. By mid-summer the ball field is a showcase. The department also maintains the college golf course.

## The Del Coronado Hotel and Resort, Coronado Island, CA

The grand red and white clapboard expanse of "The Del" inspired the writing of the *Wizard of Oz*. The immaculate seaside grounds are tended by Pack West Land Care Inc., Vista, Calif., the first outside contractor to tend these grounds near San Diego. "We change 3,000 flats of color a year," says Dan Hays, vp, Pack West Land Care. "There's a lot worse places to work in the landscape industry than on the beach at Coronado."

## Dyche Stadium Evanston, IL

The Northwestern Wildcats are playing on a new Kentucky bluegrass field at revamped Dyche Stadium, the team's first season on real grass since 1972. S.W. Franks, Cleveland, Ohio, installed the sand-based field in July. Randy Stoneberg (shown) tends the new field,



but like many of you, he has lots of other responsibilities. A native of nearby Skokie, Ill., he's been at Northwestern for 13 years.

## Gideon Ridge Inn Blowing Rock, NC

Staff and guests at the charming Gideon Ridge Inn believe in justice—that's Graeme Justice, head gardener and groundskeeper at this 10-room hotel, built on five acres atop a spectacular ridge. At an elevation of 4,000 feet, keeping the plant materials in shape is a tough hill to climb. "We can go down to 25 below (0 degrees F) and a few days later we'll be up to 45," says Justice.

## Goodyear Tire and Rubber Akron, OH

Tom Riccardi started tending this showplace corporate campus 17 years ago with 62 people for 100 acres. Now, nine fulltime and six seasonal employees maintain over 600 acres, which includes mowing 325 acres. Riccardi stresses efficiency, but not at the expense of the grounds. One challenge is preventing salt damage to turfgrass. He and his crew must remove snow and ice from eight miles of sidewalks during winter storms. The Goodyear site is also home to 100-acre wildflower garden.



## Grounds Maintenance Services, Orlando, FL

Floyd Perry runs GMS and conducts hands-on seminars for field managers. He's authored three books on groundskeeping, and publishes *The Progressive Groundskeeper* newsletter. For five years he was the director of baseball at Boardwalk & Baseball theme park, and was head



grounds keeper for the 1996 Olympics' softball field in Columbus, Ga. Perry sees a need for a change in attitude towards field management on the municipal and high school levels. "If the coaches and field personnel work together to create quality turf by moving their workouts around and shifting their heavy work to the end zones or sidelines they would have a better chance of keeping a strong biomass of turf for their big ball games," says Perry.

## Iowa State University Ames, IA

Mike Andresen has been athletic turf manager for the Cyclones since April of last year. He previously managed the turf for the Iowa Cubs in AAA baseball. He's a sharp manager, who knows the importance of micronutrients to turf health. He makes no preemergent weed control applications, and is happy to pull a few weeds here and there, to stay away from possible root stunting. "I take the philosophy that we're all paying dues," says Andresen, "and part of that is getting in and doing it and learning the day-to-day."



## Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, St. Louis, MO

For more than a decade Jim Ja-



cobs has been the man under "The Arch." As gardener/foreman with the U.S. National Parks Service, he cares for the grounds at the Gateway Arch landmark along the waterfront in St. Louis. The huge structure salutes the Louisiana Purchase made by President Thomas Jefferson. All 47 acres of the park are irrigated, and numerous plant beds, compliment over 2,600 trees.

## Howard J. Lamade Stadium South Williamsport, PA

If you watched any of the Little League World Series on television in late August you saw a great looking—and great playing—baseball field. James Scott is coordinator of Little League fields, and does a fine job. The Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization (KAFMO) helped rebuild the field late in 1995, and helps out during the Series.

## Lambeau Field Green Bay, WI

Todd Edlebeck had two weeks to install new turf at Lambeau Field (shown page 20), in time for the NFC Championship game in January. He and a lot of friends got the job done with 420 rolls of sod, installed in 10 degree weather. Edlebeck—with the team since 1980—manages 30 people during football season. The field's been replaced again for 1997-98. Edlebeck's top priority: "To make Lambeau Field one of the best."

## Mill Race Park Columbus, IN

The restoration of this 98-acre park included the planting of 686 trees. Kris Medic, city arborist and landscape manager, stresses putting the proper tree in the proper location. "They (trees) should be hand picked for the site no matter what it is. No matter if it's a modern building designed by a world class architect, or a lift station that serves a sewer plant," she says.

## Milwaukee County Stadium Milwaukee, WI

Gary Vandenburg, shown below right, and David Mellor, left, keep this facility up and running for baseball, concerts and corporate events. The crew of 35 is seasonal.



"If we have a 15-game home stand, it adds up to easily 200 hours," says Mellor. "I can't imagine having a better relationship than what David and I have, says Vandenberg. "We both think alike, look at things the same way and have a lot of respect for detail," says Gary. A new, natural grass, retractable dome field, Miller Park, is due to open on opening day, 2000.

### Minot Park District Minot, ND

Horticulturist Steve Wharton makes the most of North Dakota's short growing season. More than 600 acres of parks include a zoo. "We try to create a botanical wonderland," he explains, "but we use plants that will grow in North Dakota." Tropical plants in planters are used as annuals. The park district includes eight soccer fields and a Kentucky bluegrass Minor League ballfield, home to the Minot Mallards of the Northern Prairie League.

### Natural Athletic Turf Mequon, WI

Roy Zehren started his landscape company in 1954. Natural Athletic Turf followed in 1974. He builds or renovates 20 to 30 athletic fields a year and is a green and tee specialist for golf courses. "The most significant change I've seen," he says, "is the progress in athletic field construction using the sand-based systems and washed sod."

### New Territory Development Sugar Land, TX

The Spencer Company tends the 3,100-acre "New Territory" devel-

opment. Gregory Spencer's company takes care of more than 50 acres of lakes, 10 acres of athletic fields, 30 acres of parks, 10 acres of shrubs and groundcovers, more than 8,000 trees and 53 miles of edging. The Spencer Company was founded in 1959 by Gregory's father. Everything at New Territory is first class, and the 24 employees assigned to the facility adhere to top standards.

### Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, MO

Grounds Manager Randy Willis has plenty to do. Parking, streets, trash pickup and recycling are all under his supervision. But, he also had time to help the campus earn designation as a Missouri arboretum. The campus contains 80 varieties of trees, and they are all labeled for trail walking. "We're expanding that to cover shrubbery and groundcovers," says Willis. Visitors can enjoy the campus without having to cross a single busy street.

### Oriole Park at Camden Yards Baltimore, MD

Head groundskeeper Paul Zwaska believes that "you can never do too much monitoring," particularly root depth and soil temperature. "I know exactly how my field reacts to weather conditions." This is especially critical for a bluegrass ball field located in Baltimore. "We've finally gotten it to where we can get it to survive." He urges budding groundskeepers to develop mentors. His include Dr. Jim Love from the University of Wisconsin ("He gave me a kick in the behind when I needed it.") and Pat Santarone, who provided guidance at the old Memorial Stadium.

### Sierra High School Colorado Springs, CO

Todd Wittrock (shown) has the full support of the school's athletic team coaches in his efforts to keep the 16 acres looking like a showplace. "If the coaches don't help me, I



can't help them, and they help me quite a bit." Use of the practice fields is staggered so Wittrock can provide the proper care. He attends industry seminars and reads trade magazines to increase his knowledge. "Pin up the articles that pertain to you; you'll have them right in front of your face." Wittrock says he's got "the best job in the district."

### Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum, Cincinnati, OH

Chartered in 1845, it covers 730 total acres, 425 acres of which are mowed and developed. Not only does the park have a renowned arboretum, it also contains 14 lakes and 45 miles of high-crowned



roads-perfect for bicycles and hiking. Senior vice president is Tom Smith. Spring Grove no longer does its own road repair and it contracts with local arborists for

stump grinding and extensive tree pruning. "Any prudent business manager must ask the question whether it will cost less to do the work from the inside or outside," says Smith, a past LM "Person of the Year."

### University of Texas at El Paso El Paso, TX

The UTEP campus is built on bedrock in the Chihuahuan Desert with high-alkali, low-sulfur soils. Even so it's landscape is well-maintained and its bermudagrass is green. Irrigation and soil testing are key elements in the program used by Tony Sullivan at this 15,000-student facility. Irrigation here is a must. Average annual rainfall is 7-8 inches.

### Wide World of Sports Celebration, FL

A 200-acre sports facility includes a 7500-seat baseball stadium and a baseball quadruplex; a 5000-spectator field house; 11 tennis courts; softball facility; youth baseball fields; four soccer-sized fields, and a track and field stadium. The stadium is sodded with Tifway 419

bermudagrass, and drains seven to 10 inches of water per hour. The other sports fields are Tifway 419, with one percent crowns. Landscape/turf manager is John Strantz.

### Wrigley Field, Chicago, IL

Wrigley Field was first known as Weeghman Park and home to the Chicago Whales of the Federal League. The first National League game at the ballpark was played on



April 20th, 1916. Roger Baird and four assistants keep the turfgrass playing field green and the ivy on the outfield walls healthy. Baird has been at

Wrigley for 20 seasons, the last two as head groundsman. There's nothing fancy at Wrigley, but playing conditions there are great.

## LANDSCAPE COMPANIES

### Barnes Nursery Huron, OH

One of northern Ohio's most respected full-service lawn/landscape companies, started in 1950 by Harold Barnes as a 50-acre rose farm. Son Robert Barnes guides the



company that offers a full array of landscape services. Barnes maintains 300 acres of shade and ornamental trees and grows 75,000 containers providing nursery stock for its two retail stores, landscape operation and wholesale markets. In 1990 the firm began a composting division creating quality soil products, and most recently became involved in recycled rubber. In season, 150 people work for Barnes Nursery.

# THE LM 100

## **Blondie's Treehouse, Inc. Larchmont, NY**

This distinctively named landscape company serves satisfied customers in New York City and the surrounding tri-state area. Blondie's Treehouse, Inc., established in 1979, employs about 100 professionals and will generate sales of over \$4 million. Howard K. Freilich, CLP, President-CEO, says that although his firm is registered in the State of New York as a pesticide application business, its focus is preventive care.

## **Bozzuto Landscaping Company, Upper Marlboro, MD**

Bozzuto Landscaping Company has been serving the Baltimore, Washington D.C. and Northern Virginia markets for more than 20 years.



BLC prides itself on its employee recruiting, development and training. The management team at BLC creates a work environment that gives each

employee the opportunity to achieve his/her potential. Growing at a rate of 20 percent a year, BLC is led by President Tom Davis (shown). BLC, which should exceed \$4 million in sales this year, has been filling its trophy case with beautification and environmental awards.

## **The Brickman Group, Ltd Langhore, PA**

The Brickman Group, Ltd. is a full-service design/build landscape management company with 1997 projected revenues of \$100 million. Brickman operates through a regional network of 45 branches in 17 states, primarily the eastern and midwestern U.S.. The company was founded in 1939 by Theodore W. Brickman, Sr. and has remained a family owned and operated business. It started by focusing on the design/build sector of the industry, but has evolved into a full-service provider with a large majority of its business in landscape management.

## **Carol King Landscape Maintenance, Inc., Orlando, FL**

"We help keep Orlando beautiful," says Jerry Bachand, president. Bachand started in lawn service in the Orlando area in 1960. In 1974 he bought Carol King Landscaping (7 trucks, 12 men) and continued using the name—"it was simpler to recognize." Today, two sons help Jerry with the company which employs 138 in season with revenues over \$6 million. The company's size and reputation for quality work make it a favorite with large general contractors.

## **Coronis Landscaping, Inc. Nashua, NH**

Laurence S. Coronis founded this company in 1969 after graduating from the University of New Hampshire. He started the company as a "one man" operation. Coronis now employs 75-100 in season, and is an award-winning full-service landscaping and design firm. "Coronis' dedication to continue to educate its employees has benefited through the long-term relationships with its clients," says Laurence S. Coronis.

## **Dennis' Seven Dees Landscaping, Inc., Portland, OR**

This respected company in the Pacific Northwest offers landscape design/build, contracting and maintenance for both residential and commercial clients. Its progressive employee policy includes profit sharing, a 401(k) pension plan, open-book management, on-going training, safety incentives and community involvement. Dennis' Seven Dees has 170 employees and will generate about \$8 million in revenue this year. "We stand apart from the rest by providing exceptional people, service and quality," says company president, David Snodgrass. A great company to work for. (Employee photo appears on page 21)

## **D. Foley Landscape Walpole, MA**

Dan Foley attributes much of the company's growth to detailed estimating system—developed with help of consultant Jim Huston of Smith Huston, Inc.—and its own

landscape management programs. The *Site Management Program* gives them "a distinct competitive advantage," says Foley. The company was founded in 1987. Foley projects the company will enjoy a \$1 million year.

## **Grunder Landscaping Service, Dayton, OH**

Marty Grunder is only 28, yet he has been in the business for 14 years. He started with a \$25 mower he found at a garage sale. Today, Grunder's company has annual sales of \$1.6 million and employs 30 people. Grunder believes customers looked beyond his youth because he showed confidence in his ability to get the job done. His business philosophy and system has been published and is available to fellow professionals.

## **Grass Roots Inc. East Lansing, MI**

Tom Smith founded Grass Roots in 1982 after he completed his Masters Degree in Turfgrass Management at nearby Michigan State University.



His company, which employs 20 people in peak season, offers several unique services, like a service to rescue native plants, especially wildflowers. Smith's commitment to the precepts of "plant health care" make it special with Michigan clients. Grass Roots Inc. offers landscape design, construction and management.

## **Hermes Landscaping Lenexa, KS**

Founded in 1965 by CEO John T. Hermes (shown). Son Dalton serves as president, son Gilbert is vice president. Services include commercial and residential landscape management, sprinkler installation and a 400-acre wholesale nursery. Approxi-



mate annual sales are \$10 million. Strong training programs for about 200, including orientation, safety, technical areas related to green industry, and customer service. John Hermes retires in December, and the company will continue under sons Dalton and Gilbert. "It was very gratifying to start the business," recalls John Hermes.

## **Hillmeyer Nurseries, Inc. Lexington, KY**

Five generations, and 156 years after its founding, Hillmeyer Nurseries is still growing in central Kentucky. It's run by brothers Chris, president, (shown left) and Stephen Hillmeyer, secretary, right. About 160 workers (in peak season) staff



its two retail garden centers, 250-acre nursery, greenhouses, and landscape division. Sales just over \$8 million in 1997, but what makes its special is the relationship it has established with employees. The brothers employ a company-wide policy encouraging staff meetings. Employees know where they stand and they're regularly informed about how their departments are performing in terms of revenues and expenses.

## **Kinman Associates, Inc. Dublin, OH**

Gary Kinman and his staff of experts don't take shortcuts in their design and build work. Most of their residential projects are sizable. They make it easy for customers needing distinctive residential landscapes to get exactly what they want. Kinman and a partner started this firm in 1979. It should do about \$7 million in 1997.

**Korfhage Landscape and Designs, Inc., Louisville, KY**

Services include design/build, landscape maintenance, interior-scaping, and a retail garden center with full-service florist. The Korfhage name is respected for quality service in Louisville and surrounding areas. John and Bob Korfhage's company has about 85 people on



staff, including three landscape architects, with sales of about \$5 million this year. "We enjoy the challenge of designing and implementing a unique landscape environment for our clients, and then maintaining that landscape so that it will retain its beauty year after year," says John.

**Landtrends, Inc San Diego, CA**

Jon Ewing founded Landtrends in 1981. Today the company employs over 300 with sales over \$10 million annually from landscape construction, maintenance, irrigation management, and Miramar wholesale nursery. It's active in Southern California and Las Vegas, NV.

Ewing points to some of the company's more visible recent projects: maintenance of the 100-acre Arco Olympic Training Center, and the landscaping of the White Tiger Exhibit at the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas.



**Lawns Etc., Reno, NV**

Paul Flint started this company in 1979 with a mower and a small pick-up truck. Today, Lawns Etc., provides lawn and landscape maintenance service to over 400 properties in



northern Nevada. Flint's watchwords have been "education and pride," because besides gaining Master Gardener status and becoming certified himself, he provides his employees with three landscape management classes each year to improve their skill and professionalism.

**The Morrell Group, Inc. Atlanta, GA**

You can tell Morrell Group employees by their clean-cut appearance and the efficient, safe way they do their jobs. The company employs 180 people and will exceed \$9 million in '97. The firm's Maintenance Group services more than 250 commercial customers, including corporate headquarters of Bell South, Cox Enterprises, Delta Air Lines, and others. Also, landscape design/installation, irrigation, technical services, seasonal color. George Morrell, involved in the landscape industry for several decades, started this company in 1989.



**The Pattie Group, Inc. Novelty, OH**

The Pattie Group, Inc., does award-winning work out of its offices in a small town in Northeast, Ohio. Steve R. Pattie started the company in 1966 and called it Pattie's Landscaping. PGI has grown beyond that. A new concept being tried by PGI is known as Project Management. PGI develops a team of professionals to design and build both the indoor and outdoor living spaces for both residential and commercial settings, involving architects, designers, horticulturists and construction crews.



**Pro Scapes, Inc. Jamesville, NY**

"We're big enough to do a good

job and small enough to care." That's what Pro Scapes, Jamesville, NY, tells clients. President Rick Kier started this business with a single pick up truck in 1978; Pro Scapes now employs about 45 people in season, and the company's red trucks are a common sight in and around Syracuse, NY. Pro Scapes does it all—from chemical applications to snow removal.



**Post Landscape Services, Inc. Atlanta, GA**

Post Landscape Services, Inc., was formed in October 1990 to bring the Post Properties, Inc. tradition of landscape architecture, design/build, installation and full service maintenance so visible on its apartment communities to other environments. Well known for its "traffic stopping" season color displays, PLS constantly seeks new ways to create unique landscapes and gardens. With a staff of 85 people, this firm's consulting, contracting and maintenance operations work together as a single team, from the inception of a project to its on-going management. Post will generate sales of \$10.3 million in 1997, mostly from the commercial sector.

**Rae's Greenscapes Naples, FL**

What makes Rae's Greenscapes special? "Training, pride and teamwork," says President Steven R. Pruchansky (shown right). This 35-year-old firm with its 80 fulltime employees offers lawn installations and repairs, landscape management, lawn maintenance, irrigation



services, spray services and arbor services. Greenscapes staff members have volunteered thousands of hours at Youth Haven, a haven for abused children and Habitat for Humanity, the group that builds housing for the disadvantaged. Linda Rae Nelson, left, daughter of founder Ethel Rae Nelson, is VP of Operations.

**St. John and Associates Hattisburg, MS**

"Our goal is to consistently exceed the client's expectations," has been Drew and Kathy St. John's mission since establishing this company in 1992. St. John & Associates is a regional provider of diversified design/build, landscape construction and interior/exterior hort services. It employs a team of 25. Its award-winning projects are on time and within budget.



**Southern Tree & Landscape Companies, Charlotte, NC**

With offices in Charlotte, Raleigh, Greensboro and Wilmington, Southern Tree & Landscape Companies employs 200-300 in peak season. Ralph Boone started



Southern Shade Tree Co. in 1954 as a tree transplanting and tree surgery company. Roger Braswell (shown) started Braswell's Lawn & Landscape in 1968 when he

was 15. In December 1976, Braswell purchased the assets of Southern Shade Tree Co., combining the two companies, into a new business. The Charlotte office provides commercial landscape services and treescaping, while the Raleigh company and its branches in Greensboro and Wilmington offer full-service commercial landscape services.

**Stano Landscaping, Milwaukee, WI**

Matthew Stano started out of his garage as a lawn care operator in





# THE LM 100

1963. He incorporated the company in 1971. In peak season Stano employs about 150 people, with a core staff of about 50 providing residential and commercial landscape design/build, management, and snow removal. Matthew's been active with the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association, and the Wisconsin Landscape Federation.

**Valley Crest, Calabasas, CA**  
Valley Crest is the nation's largest landscape and construction company. Through the first half of this year it had secured contracts of \$97 million. "The diversity of projects tells us that builders and developers recognize Valley Crest can excel at any type of job, from streetscapes, golf courses and sports fields to theme parks and resorts," says Richard A. Sperber, president and COO of Valley Crest which has nine regional branches across the United States.

## LAWN CARE COMPANIES

### Arborlawn, Inc., Lansing, MI

Gerald Grossi is owner of this quality firm located in Michigan's capital city. Grossi, 18 years in the industry, has worked to elevate the entire industry as evidenced by his participation in the Michigan Lawn Service Association, the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation, and with PLCAA.

### Arbor-Nomics Turf, Inc. Atlanta, GA

Richard J. Bare started this company in 1980 as a tree and shrub care company serving the greater Atlanta area. In 1986 he added turf care. Arbor-Nomics, offering superior service, has seen its market place, the north Atlanta suburbs explode with growth. Bare recently started another branch on Atlanta's west side. It's jointly owned



with Doug Cash, vp and gm of both operations.

### Bio Green Ashburn, VA

Bio Green turns 10 this season. Its three offices in northern Virginia—Manassas, Ashburn, and Winchester—service more than 3000 customers. Bio Green is proud of its "prescription" approach to lawn care. "A large national company cannot do that, nor can they know all the local problems, requirements and cures in a particular city or development," says Executive VP Wayne L. Schrader.

### Cooper's Lawn Aeration Service, Virginia Beach, VA

This million-dollar firm is mostly staffed by former military personnel. Cooper knows that preparing a proper battle plan is critical and makes use of experts including extension specialists and university turfgrass authorities. Cooper's firm has built some excellent relationships with landscape and mowing companies. "Other companies call us to do the chemical aspects of their programs," he says.

### Crowley Lawn Care Cleveland, OH

"Every day we talk about keeping our promises," says owner Phil Fogarty. About a third of the Crowley LC's business is subcontracting for landscape firms. "They've allowed us to network with their customers and they've been able to concentrate on what they do best."



### Emerald Green, Van Wert, OH

Emerald Green provides superior lawn care in a five-county area in north-west Ohio. It's a small company and its owner, Gene Pool, does his share of production—like many of you. Pool,



17 years in the business, also participates annually in PLCAA's Legislative Day, serves on the PLCAA board, and, this year, leads the Ohio Lawn Care Association as president. You have to be big to be great?

### Fairway Green, Inc. Raleigh, NC

"Our highly trained staff and comprehensive lawn care programs prevent common problems before they occur," says owner Sam Lang. Fairway Green, Inc., has about 3,000 residential and commercial customers. Lang says great service translates equals low cancellations.



### Farison Lawn Care Louisville, KY

"There's nothing like a face-to-face with a customer on his lawn," says Sam Farison who started this company in 1971 with his brother and business partner Dan Farison. These Louisville-area natives rely on the personal approach to business—walking lawns to offer accurate estimates and selling face to face. Primarily a chemical lawn care company, Farison Lawn Care offers some mechanical services.

### The Greenskeeper, Inc. Carmel, IN

Expansion is the goal for The Greenskeeper, Inc., which, since 1981, has been serving customers on the north side of Indianapolis. A wholly owned subsidiary, Green Carpet Lawn Services of Jasper, services the southwest section of Indiana. Look for this firm to open another location in Indianapolis. It's owned by Robert and Jennifer Andrews.

### GroGreen, Plano, TX

Winner of the Plano and Collin County 1996 "Reader's Choice Award" for best lawn service, GroGreen is run by Gary LaScalea. In addition to many satisfied customers, the company provides all

the professional lawn care, tree and shrub care, fertilization, weed/insect/disease control for Southfork Ranch of the "Dallas" tv series, now a tourist attraction.

### Heritage Lawns Farmington, CT

Company president James Leszuk switched the direction of Heritage Lawns from a residential to a commercial focus last year. The move has been positive, resulting in higher morale within the company, better customer service and a tighter business focus, says Leszuk. The move has also allowed the Connecticut firm to strengthen its tree and shrub program.

### Lawn Cure, Inc. of Southern Indiana, Jeffersonville, IN

"We go one step beyond what is reasonable to satisfy our customers' lawn care needs and wants." That's been Lawn Cure's motto since its founding in 1978 by Larry Messina.



Lawn Cure does about 20 percent of its business across the river in Louisville, KY, the remainder in southern Indiana. Of its 2500 chemical

lawn care customers, about 85 percent are residential. A division of the company, "No Gro" Weed Control provides industrial weed control. Messina is pleased with the acceptance of this service.

### Lawn Master, Pensacola, FL

Not even hurricanes (it has suffered several in the past few years.) can stop this family operation which provides lawn and shrub care services to over 4,000 and commercial properties along the Gulf Coast. Lawn Master expanded operations to include lawn maintenance, mostly commercial accounts. Joe Williams



(shown) and his two brothers-in-law Ken and Ray Weekley started the company in 1981. In 1994, Joe's sons, Jeff and Scott, bought out Ken and Ray's ownership in the company.

**Lawn Management, Inc.  
Venetia, PA**

The husband/wife team of Tony and Pat Raffaele started this company in 1984, and have provided fertilizer and pest control services to some of the same customers' lawns since then. The Raffaeles have grown the company primarily by word of mouth resulting from excellent service. They offer fertilizers blended specially for clients' lawns. The south hills of Pittsburgh is their market area.

**Liqui-Green of Central Illinois  
Bloomington, IL**

Liqui-Green of Central Illinois is 19 years old and operates three franchises in Illinois: Bloomington, Springfield and Decatur. It offers turf fertilization and weed control



programs along with aeration, seeding and insect control. It also offers a comprehensive shrub and tree care program. This Midwestern company has prospered. It

keeps a close eye on the market and stays in tune with it, thanks to vice president/owner David Harris.

**Massey's GreenUP Lawn,  
Tree & Shrub, Maitland, FL**

Massey's is a Florida leader. The company offers a complete agro-economic program based on the specific conditions and needs of each individual piece of property. Massey's is headquartered in Maitland, just outside of Orlando.

**Munie Outdoor Services, Inc.  
Belleville, IL**

Munie Outdoor Services has been providing residential and commercial lawn programs to customers in the St. Louis areas since 1980. Joe Munie started out as an LCO. But his company has evolved

to offer a full range of landscape services. Its staff includes a certified arborist, registered landscape architect and fully licensed applicators.



"We approach the consumer who wants quality and who understands the value of quality," is one of the firm's philosophies. Munie's low employee-to-supervisor ratio is one reason for the firm's success.

**Natural Lawns, Inc.  
Merrifield, VA**

In 10 years Natural Lawns has grown from a small, local lawn care company to a regional operation with customers in northern Virginia, Washington D.C., and Montgomery County, MD (Bay Country Natural Lawns). Services include lawn and shrub care, aeration and seeding. A couple of years ago, Natural Lawns



purchased a small lawn care company and moved into Fredericksburg, VA. The company is run by business partners Bern Bonifant and Dan Henneberg. Shown above, from left are Jeff Mansfield, German Vergara and Kevin Walter.

**Northern Lawns, Inc.  
Omaha, NB**

"Our belief is that there will always be a demand for a small, locally owned company that responds quickly to customers' needs," says Northern Lawns President Dale Amstutz. The



company, in its 16th year, serves nearly 2000 customers in and around Omaha. In recent years it has been growing its tree and shrub care business too.

**Pro-X Systems  
Appleton, WI**

Pro-X Systems is 10 years old.

Lou Wierichs, Jr. is president and CEO. His wife Cindy is secretary/treasurer. Wierichs has also served the green industry as president of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA). The firm's mission statement is simple: "Create a Satisfied Customer."



**Pro-Lawn-Plus,  
Baltimore, MD**

Pro-Lawn-Plus has been providing quality lawn and tree/shrub care service to the Baltimore metropolitan area for 19 years, with over 3200 customers. "We take pride in our dedicated and knowledgeable staff, who are always willing to take the necessary measures to satisfy our customers," says owner Mark Schlossberg, a longtime supporter both of Maryland Turf and PLCAA.

**Pro Lawn Plus  
Jacksonville, FL**

Nick Dennis believes in providing top-notch lawn services. And he believes in marketing, including radio advertising and a print campaign involving blades of grass dressed as football players (playing off the success of the local J'ville Jaguars). He promotes the hometown nature of Pro Lawn Plus's service. "We've seen the market open up. We're back on top," he says.

**ServiceMaster/Irmo,  
Irmo, SC**

Top pay and benefits help Gene Broome retain great employees as does "a continuous, ongoing and non-nonsense training program."

When customers call his firm they don't get a recording; they get a real person from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays and until 2 p.m. on Saturdays. Broome's goal is "unbeatable customer service". He says having an excellent franchisor helps too.

**The Swingle Tree Company  
Denver, CO**

Swingle celebrates 50 years in business this year. John Swingle started the company in 1947 with a war-surplus Jeep and a single helper. Today the company has 90 fulltime employees and 60 seasonal employees. It's recognized by just about everybody in the Denver metropolitan area, not just for its tree work but also for its lawn care programs. The Swingle Tree Company is successful, in part, because of its commitment to its community as evidenced by volunteer efforts with Wilderness on Wheels Foundation.

**TurfGard Co. Inc.  
Dayton, Ohio**

"The level of service our technicians provide has kept us at a rather low cancellation rate," says Bill Clutter, president. "We will not play the price game. We sell the benefits of what we are doing and people appreciate that approach." Clutter started in lawn care in the mid 1970s and slowly grew TurfGard by buying several smaller companies. It offers lawn and tree/shrub services in a very competitive Dayton market. **LM**



For reprints of this feature, call (800) 225-4569, ext. 744.