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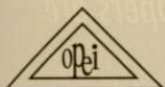
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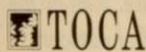
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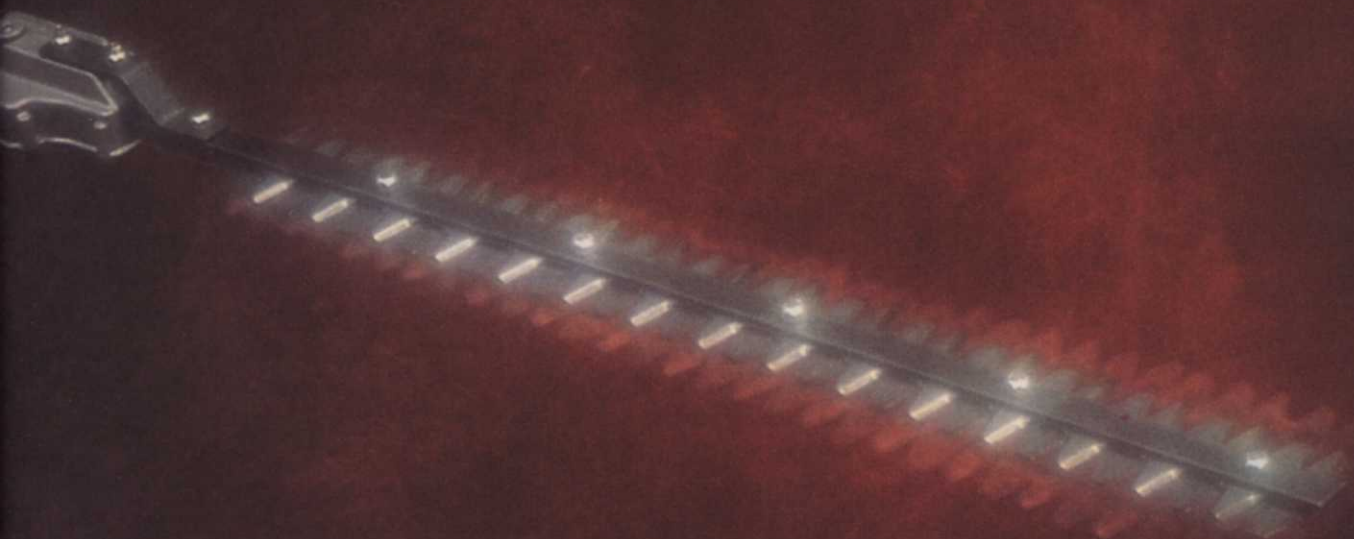
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**B**lowing leaves, darkening days and brooding skies — clear signals that the end of the year is coming. It's time to take stock of what we've accomplished this past year and what we didn't do so well. It is a terrific exercise to do individually and as an organization — to look back on the year's successes and failures just when you're planning for next year.

Maybe time is on our minds here at LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT. Usually our articles look forward, with tips on buying, planting, managing in the future. This time, our cover story ("Summer Success Stories" page 20) looks back at how green industry professionals around the country tried new approaches and made them work in 1998.

Their ideas ranged from using a new sales approach to working with new landscape materials to outsourcing work for the first time. They took the leap with new management software (a frightening idea in itself if you've ever switched computer systems), experimented with high- and low-tech products and invested in the future by building new facilities. These ideas worked for our examples and something similar may work for you.

One thing each organization did to ensure its success was to analyze thoroughly, plan well and implement the project in the right way. You probably already know how risky new ventures can be without good planning and execution.

What is important to recognize is that every risk worth taking should offer substantial reward — why else would investors buy junk bonds? In fact, many previously "successful" investors are getting a real education in the meaning of risk this fall. For those who have only seen their investments continuously ratchet up in the past few

years, this market's roller-coaster ride is pretty sobering.

That shouldn't stop you from investing, or making new business plans, as long as you've tempered your risk with analysis, planning and a balanced approach. If you aren't already planning ahead for 1999, start by reviewing your own successes and failures of this year, and try to incorporate that knowledge into your new initiatives.

Although we've presented success stories, we know how prevalent failed ideas are. Painful as it may be, this is the time to study your failures and figure out what you did wrong. Did you jump too quickly into a project or purchase without thinking it through? Did you let a false deadline rush you into a critical decision? Did you fail to look at how your idea would affect your finances, your workload, your management structure, your customers, your employees, your own life? Did all your good analysis and planning go to waste because no one was able to "make it happen" the way you planned?

Don't beat yourself up too hard. Remember that even the "big boys" make mistakes. Remember "New Coke?" The Edsel? GM's failure to change the name of its Nova model for Spanish-speaking markets ("No va" means "no go")? Once you've figured out what you did wrong, consider what you should have done to make it right. We don't usually get to "do over" in life, except in our minds. What financial or staff resources could have made the difference? What extra knowledge about your market, your competitors or your customers could have helped your initiative along? What did you fail to anticipate? This kind of insight is golden because it can neutralize future risk and it can keep you from failing next time.

A critical element of taking risks is to learn from the mistake, put it behind you and keep on trying. Why? Because the rewards are worth it. Because it's fun and that's what brought you into this business in the first place. Because you are good enough to beat your competition in many ways. Being successful is why investors keep coming back and why we are already looking forward to next spring's growing season. **LM**

## What's your success story?



*Sue Gibson*

**SUE GIBSON**  
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## Battling pond weeds

*In Landscape Management, Aug 98, there was an article on Storm Water Ponds. We have one and have planted pond vegetation on the edges. My problem is how to kill the undesirable plants that come up in deeper water just out from the desirable plants.*

—ARIZONA

According to the people in our Conservation Sciences division, there may be a way to control unwanted aquatic vegetation in your storm water pond with little or minimal damage to the desirable vegetation that you planted. As with any 'weed' problem, it is important to know what the weeds are and then determine the best product for treatment.

If the storm water pond is small, it may be difficult to selectively treat aquatic weeds without impacting the plants you want to keep. However, if it is determined that herbicide treatment can be used, application can be selective by carefully placing the herbicide on target plants and avoiding non-target plants.

There are many publications available on the topic of aquatic plant control. A good place to shop for information is on the web site of the North American Lake Management Society ([www.nalms.org](http://www.nalms.org)). A helpful publication published by NALMS is "Aquatic Plant Management in Lakes and Reservoirs," 1997. Information on how to obtain this booklet can be found on NALMS web site.

(ed note — see another

available reference in Oct. '98 LM Info Center on page 40.)

## Tree losing bark

*I planted a 5 ft. Katsura tree 3 years ago. The tree has grown about 1.5 ft. and gets full of leaves each spring and new growth. The bark from the ground up to about 1 foot is split and peeling with exposed trunk that is cracking. Part of the lower bark is discolored or darkening. This seems to get worse each year. The tree is located in full sun. Is this from normal growth? If not what do I need to do to save this tree?*

—NEW JERSEY

The problem is probably related to sun scald and bark splitting which is common on Katsura and other thin-barked trees.

On sunny days in winter, a tree trunk may be warmed as much as 20°F above air temperature, particularly on the southwest side. If the bark temperature drops quickly to a critical level, injury or death to the bark and cambium of sensitive trees may occur. This is called sunscald though it is actually a freezing injury. Reports indicate that shading a trunk or painting it with white latex exterior paint can moderate daily temperature extremes and reduce the potential for sun scald.

Lower trunk splitting may also be caused by frost cracks although trees 6-18 inches in diameter are more likely to be affected than either larger or smaller trees. From your explanation, the tree in question is

much smaller. Frost cracks are typically associated with internal injury and decay.

Improve plant health through proper fertilizing, mulching and watering as needed. Monitor the plant for any insect and/or disease problems and manage these problems as needed. You may wish to consider wrapping the tree trunk for the winter and removing the wraps in the spring to help protect the tree from temperature extremes.

## Ash Flower Galls

*Ash trees in our area look bad every year due to a type of gall. We noticed that the problem occurs mostly on male plants. What could this problem be and how can we manage it?*

—ONTARIO, CANADA

Sounds like ash flower gall, which is caused by eriophyid mites. This disease attacks the staminate male flowers of white ash. The flowers develop abnormally and form very irregular galls. These galls dry out, forming clusters which are conspicuous on the trees during winter.

Consider treating the plants with Sevin after the buds swell and before the new growth emerges in spring, or apply horticultural oil during the dormancy. Sevin is effective on eriophyid mites. Several applications may be needed.

Read and follow label directions for best results. **LM**



**BALAKRISHNA RAO**

*Manager of Research and Technical Development for the Davey Tree Co. Kent, Ohio*

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**T**he decay and decomposition of organic matter is a natural recycling process that has occurred for eons. In the forest, this recycling continually supplies the sources of nutrients for the on-going process of plant growth. Leaves, twigs and woody debris fall and rise again as nutrients building a new plant.

Organisms such as insects and fungi help this process of decay, but not necessarily only on dead wood. There are some organisms which exist in living trees and are considered to be *pathogenic* when contributing to or causing the death of a tree. They already can be at work when a tree is still green and standing.

In the forest, where many of the external stresses that affect landscape trees are limited, individual conifers with thinning crowns and poor shoot growth may be infected with decay fungi. As well, the progression and spread of the disease to the surrounding trees may be quite apparent.

In the landscape, however, we generally will not observe the spread of

decay fungi from tree to tree. Thinning crowns and reduced shoot elongation could be caused by any number of human induced factors, including root girdling or compacted soils.

One thing that can help us see the presence of some decay fungi is the existence of conks or mushrooms on the tree or surface roots. These are the fruiting structures of certain decay fungi and their presence may indicate that a disease is well established. Basal conks and mushrooms can be considered to indicate decay fungi present in the roots and base of the tree. Conks further along the trunk can indicate columns of decay in the trunk.

The presence of decay in a tree can cause a reduction in the structural stability of the tree. In fact, a 5 percent loss of wood weight can result in

significant loss of wood strength. While in the forest, this might not be a serious concern, in the landscape it should be. Even before the presence of visible symptoms of decay, the structural integrity of the tree has been compromised. Once decay symptoms are visible the progression of the decay is well established and may be quite advanced. The tree must then be evaluated for hazard concerns.

The presence of perennial conks is sometimes overlooked as they start small and increase in size from year to year. So it can be easy to fail to note their presence or significance. The summer and fall can be a good time, however, to notice the presence of annual conks and mushrooms. The fact that they occur 'suddenly' where there was nothing before can catch our attention.

While in some cases the fungus may not be a concern, there are other fungi whose activities are serious enough for the tree to be considered for removal. Few of us are expert enough to differentiate between the variety of fungi fruiting bodies out there, which is where extension services or diagnostic testing facilities may come in handy.

Even if you don't deal with customers' trees, if you observe conks or mushrooms on a tree, inform your client. This is particularly important where a potential target or high use area exists. Recommend that they have the tree looked at by a professional such as a certified arborist with hazard tree experience, and have the fungus identified. A good professional should have the ability and tools or resources to help identify the extent and severity of the decay and to make appropriate recommendations.

Agree/Disagree? Comments/Questions? Column Suggestions? Let Nancy Stairs know at 440/891-2623. Fax: 440/891-2675. E-Mail: [nstairs@advanstar.com](mailto:nstairs@advanstar.com) **LM**

## Keep an eye out for signs of fungi in trees



*Nancy Stairs*

**NANCY STAIRS**  
Technical Editor





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# Craig Ruppert heads expanding TruGreen-ChemLawn Landscape

**ASHTON, MD**— Craig Ruppert describes Ruppert Landscape's recent decision to join with TruGreen-ChemLawn as a merger. "Our company has become part of their company and visa versa, and we are working together to build a new company under the TruGreen-ChemLawn organization," he told LM.

"A tremendous amount of deliberation took place as we chose the best option for both our customers and employees," he added. "Our employees are genuinely excited about the opportunities our combined resources will bring to them as well as to our customers."

The Maryland-based company's decision provided TruGreen-ChemLawn's newly formed landscape division with an additional \$45 million in sales for 1998, but more significantly, with experienced leadership as Ruppert now serves as senior vice president of the TruGreen-ChemLawn Landscape Division. Ruppert Landscape will continue to operate under its current name and leadership.

"Ruppert provides us with a strong platform for expansion in the eastern portion of the United States and we are excited that founder Craig Ruppert and the Ruppert management team will play a

leadership role nationally in managing this growing business," added David M. Slott in a recent news release. Slott is president and COO of TG-CL, the lawn care giant with about \$770 million in sales in 1998.

"I see Ruppert Landscape Company as a significant addition and a great platform company for our new landscape contracting division," added Slott.



**Craig Ruppert to head TruGreen-ChemLawn's new landscape division.**



**Maryland headquarters of Ruppert Landscape will serve as headquarters for growing TruGreen-ChemLawn landscape division.**

Ruppert's Maryland location is headquarters for the TG-CL Landscape Division which is presently divided into several geographical regions: West headed by Richard Ackerman of Northwest Landscape Industries;

Central headed by David Minor of Minor's Landscape Services, and the East headed by Chris Davitt, of Ruppert Landscape. The Atlanta market in the Southeast is being overseen by Joe Skelton,

Lifescapes, Inc. "There are many many more key people in those organizations who

practices and share approaches among brother operations so that TG-CL can present the marketplace with a uniform product.

"Our goal is not to be the biggest landscape company," he told LM. "We want to be known as being the best as serving our customers, our employees, and our shareholders."

TruGreen-ChemLawn, headquartered in Memphis, moved into landscape contracting earlier this year by acquiring Minor's Landscape Services, Ft. Worth; Environmental Landscape Services, Houston; Northwest Landscape Industries, Portland; and Otey Brothers, Boston.

In addition to Ruppert, it has since attracted the following landscape companies: Landscape Concepts, Houston; Cook Services, Austin; Earth Management, Boston; Lifescapes, Atlanta; and late in August, California Landscape Maintenance, Los Angeles, and Evergreen Landscape, Inc., Austin, TX.

TG-CL is a part of ServiceMaster Consumer Services, one of two major operating segments of Chicago-based ServiceMaster, with sales of \$5.6 billion.

are playing key roles on a national level," said Ruppert.

He added that TruGreen-ChemLawn Landscape will continue to explore growth through acquisitions in 1998, but an equally important task will be to implement best



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# Introducing the John Deere

It's the new crown jewel of the John Deere commercial mowing line. Designed to improve your productivity, reduce downtime and make maintenance easier, this zero-turn-radius mower is powered by a 20-hp overhead-valve engine.

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many other machines gobble up. Space that can be used for additional equipment, like walk-behinds and handhelds.

The John Deere Z-machine is a 12-hour-day dream-come-true. The high-back seat has 5 inches of fore-and-aft adjustment and coil-spring suspension to smooth out the ride. Optional armrests provide an additional



TM

# TRAK

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Faded text on the right side of the page, possibly a short paragraph or a list of items.

# TRAK™

## Material collection system

Large 9-bushel-capacity system has 16-inch-diameter fan and 8-inch suction hose that handle even damp grass. Door latch operates from seat. To increase stability, the optional dual-rear-wheel kit is recommended.



## New 6

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Whether you choose the 48-, 54- or 60-inch deck, all have the same great feature — they rotate 90 degrees for easy service. Flip-up decks also save space on your trailer, leaving more room for additional equipment like hand-helds and walk-behinds.



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### 30-inch deck

Original Z-Trak deck is rugged 7-gauge one-piece steel. Other decks (54-inch) are built of one-piece steel. All have 18-inch cutting height that can be adjusted with a pedal right from the seat.



### Engines

The F620 is powered by a 20-hp V-Twin air-cooled gas engine. Overhead-valve design provides more horsepower, torque, and better fuel efficiency. Full-pressure lubrication and standard oil filter for longer life.

### Low center of gravity

provides better stability and traction on hillsides.



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The hood on our Z-Trak flips up for quick engine compartment access. Combine that with our 90-degree rotating decks and John Deere has the easiest-to-service Z-machine in the industry. Hoods and decks lock into position for safety while servicing.

### Wheel/tire options

The single rear-wheel configuration is standard on the Z-Trak. For greater stability with the material collection system, the optional dual-rear-wheel kit is recommended. Standard turf tires (shown) are well suited for most applications. Optional knobby tires improve traction in wet conditions.

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# FQPA represents huge industry challenge

**PALM BEACH, FL**— Bringing about change to the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) will not be easy. The Director of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of Pesticide Programs Marcia Mulkey said as much at the Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment's (RISE's) eighth annual meeting in September.

On the other hand, lobbyist David Crow brought the specialty pesticide industries a ray of hope when he spoke at the same meeting. "I would ask the EPA to go slower, take its time, issue limited tolerances and give us (the industry) the opportunity to develop the science," he said.

Crow said that earlier this

year, the EPA was moving to eliminate an entire class of chemistry, the organophosphates, when the users of these products appealed to their legislators.

"This may have saved a huge number of our products, simply because of the political pressure applied," he said. "Congressional members got a huge number of letters, calls and visits."

An average member of Congress gets 20,000 to 25,000 letters a month, Crow said, and if they don't hear from their people, nothing happens when a lobbyist walks into their offices.

"If we don't continue our direct involvement in this process, we are not going to

have any of the products we want to keep around," he added. "You have to step up the pace in 1999 and 2000 if you want to keep your products. Congress must continue to understand how much is at stake for us."

During her speech, Mulkey said, "I have no doubt that the fundamental principles articulated in the statute are virtually impossible to argue with. It makes good sense to say that, when you are looking at the effects of a pesticide on a person or on the environment, you have to look at all of the sources of exposure together. This refers to the statute's aggregate risk provision."

Mulkey added that if a group of pesticides operate in the same way toward a person or the environment, then the EPA must look at the cumulative exposure of all of the sources together.

"Finally, the notion that we will go the extra mile for children, makes sense," she continued. "We all expect an extra margin of safety when it comes to children."

However, during the question-and-answer period, Mulkey did admit that the extra

mile for children theme "may also be good politics."

Mulkey concluded that all of the FQPA's fundamental principles are not debatable, and are not much debated. "The tricky part is figuring out how to implement them in way that make sense.

"The truth is that FQPA has changed the way we think about pesticides for everyone," she said. "All sources of exposure are now thought about in the same way and in the same risk assessment. FQPA created a premium on risk mitigation. It is easy to abandon a use for a product. It is much more difficult to keep uses while dramatically altering exposure."

Mulkey said she suspects that because the FQPA begins with the word "food" and focuses on food, non-food users such as pest control and lawn care may think that they will get short shrift. They may think they will be sacrificed in the process, or may be overwhelmed by the focus on dietary risk.

"I can tell you that I hear the exact same fears from the agricultural side," she said. "They say that food uses may be blamed for all of the risk, for example."

*by Jerry Mix*

## MACH2™ registered in NY

MACH2™, manufactured and marketed by Rohmid (a joint venture of Rohm and Haas and American Cyanamid), has been granted registration by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation. The product is approved for use in all states except Arizona and California.

A 1.5-percent granular formulation of MACH2 is available for use on all turf sites, including home lawns, golf courses and athletic fields. The liquid (ZSC) formulation is available for use on golf courses, commercial landscapes and sod farms. Due to more stringent conditions for pesticide use in Suffolk and Nassau Counties (Long Island), MACH2 liquid and granular formulations will not be available for use or sale until further notice.

The pesticide controls a variety of grubs and caterpillars on home lawns, commercial landscapes and golf course by accelerating the normal molting process of targeted pests.

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## LandCare USA, Inc. focuses on SE, Calif.

**Houston, TX**— LandCare USA recently closed more transactions, and shows no signs of slowing down in its march to be a national landscape/tree service provider.

In early September, the Houston-based company, took another step toward that goal by acquiring:

**Greentree Incorporated of Georgia**, Atlanta, founded by Steve Champ in 1970. It provides primarily landscape maintenance services to multi-family, multi-location customers. Greentree has 12 locations across the Southeast, from Jacksonville to Memphis and Nashville.

**Arteka Southeast Corporation**, Atlanta, founded by David Luse and Karen Corcoran in 1997. Its operations will be combined with Greentree.

**Pacific Environmental Landscape Maintenance, Inc.**, Lake Forest, CA, established in 1972, a provider of landscape maintenance services primarily to homeowners' associations.

**Redwood Landscaping Company**,

Santa Rosa, CA, founded in 1972. Under the leadership of Lebo Newman it performs services primarily for commercial customers.

Since going public on June 4, 1998, LandCare USA has closed transactions or entered into letters of intent to acquire landscape services companies with combined revenues of about \$150 million. Combined with earlier mergers they push the company's projected 1998 revenues to \$275 million..

"With these additions, LandCare USA now services approximately 53 percent of the top 40, and 65 percent of the top 20 commercial real estate areas in the United States with particular concentrations in California, Texas and the Southeast," said Bill Murdy, chairman and CEO.

LandCare USA now provides comprehensive landscape and tree services from over 60 locations: 19 in the western region, including northern and southern CA and AZ; 16 locations in the central region, including TX, IL and, MN; 26 locations in the eastern region, in AL, FL, GA, NC, SC, and TN.



David and Julie Luse make a statement on the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro. Luse, Arteka Corporation, Eden Prairie, MN, is one of the seven founding members of LandCare USA.

## Swingle promotes Dickson, Tolkacz

**DENVER, CO**— Swingle Tree Company announced that Tom Tolkacz has been appointed company president and Dave Dickson to chairman. Previously Tolkacz was vice president and Dickson was president of the company.

Dickson has been with Swingle since 1967 and became its president in 1988. Tolkacz joined Swingle 11 years ago and has run the company operations for the past five years.

Swingle Tree was started over 50 years ago and provides landscape and arbor services throughout the Denver metro area.

## Michigan environmental program starts strong

**Lansing, MI**— Michigan's Environmental Stewardship Program is off to a strong start. Introduced this past spring, it already had about 30 participating golf courses by early fall. Sometime in the future, grounds facilities will be included in the program.

"The program is designed to augment the Audubon (Cooperative Sanctuary) Program and is focused in two areas—pollution prevention and environmental enhancements," Michigan State University turfgrass expert Greg Lyman told LM. "The pollution prevention section is the area we are leading with; it's unique, partnering the industry with MSU and state agencies to collaborate on managing potential point sources of pollution on golf courses.

"The environmental enhancement section is one that we will develop this fall," he added. "Anyone involved in the Audubon program will be way ahead of the curve here."

State agencies are also enthusiastic about the partnership with MSU and industry. "At one time, golf courses and turfgrass managers were seen as part of the problem. Now they're seen as part of the solution," said Keith Creagh, with the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

To learn more about the Michigan Environmental Stewardship Program, contact: Debra Spakoff Swartz at (517) 353-3208 (e-mail: swartzdJ@pilot.msu.edu) or Greg Lyman at 517/353-0860 (e-mail: lyman@msue.msu.edu).



# Fall Brings Harvest of Success

*Fall is a good time to look at the fruits of our labor throughout the industry.*

By ROBERT E. REAVES

**W**e all like to read about success stories in our industry. They make us think about ways we can improve our own business. And with the summer of 1998 behind us, can you think of a better time to reflect about the projects, products and business practices that made a difference in the green industry around the country? Our sampling of various business accomplishments came up with a wide range of responses — everything from computer software to plant growth regulators.

#### Software a plus

Our first stop on the "success story tour" is Pro Scapes, a Jamesville, NY-based landscape management firm. Pro Scapes installed new business management software that makes a difference — both from a financial and quality standpoint. "Our customers will come out winners because they'll get a much more accurate estimate,"



**Rick Kier, president of Pro Scapes is happy with new business management program for tracking job completion and costs.**

says Rick Kier, president of Pro Scapes. "To set up the program, we hired an outside computer consultant for around \$9,000," discloses Kier. "However, many landscape management companies can use a commercially available software program that would cost less."

The software focuses on goal times, which includes the hours to complete a job and the amount of materials used — such as pesticides, fertilizer, topsoil and mulch. "For our foremen, goal setting gives them the independence

to do the job, yet still know their time and budget limitations," Kier says. If the costs go above budget, the foreman has the ability make revisions and communicate the information with the the customer.

"We now have the ability to track and set goals for every job," adds Kier. "As an example, we maintain a condo complex where spring cleanup varied between 120 and 180 hours to complete." Pro Scapes used a goal time of 157 hours for the site, based on the average of the low and high end of the job times. "The time to complete the spring cleanup is now just under or at the goal time of 157 hours."

"Because we'll have an ongoing account history, we can fine tune our goals at contract renewal times. And when a crew foreman receives a job order, he knows where he is going and how much time the job should take," explains Kier. Even with the attention to goals, Kier wants his crew to understand that safety and quality are always more important than the goal times. "We don't want the crew rushing around to get a job completed at the expense of safety and quality."

New software is a success story down in Austin, TX, too. With a budget of \$7.9 million and more than 200 parks, the City of Austin Parks Department needed help tracking expenses, employee work crews and predicting future costs. Two years ago the department had difficulty tracking expenses versus budget. To solve this dilemma, the answer arrived in the form of some new maintenance management software. "Because of the software, we can now track expenses on all routine and preventative maintenance and even know the time it takes to mow the medians or repair an irrigation system," explains Leon Barba, division manager of operations for the Austin Parks Department.

"The software program is user friendly, too. From now on we can track expenses against budget," remarks Barba. The software is already improving efficiency in the department's forestry division, which had a backlog of more than 1,000 calls. "That number is now down to approximately 100 because of the software," says Barba. "The software also provides daily input sheets and lets us know where the crews are each day."

#### **Computerized Irrigation and PGRs**

Computerized irrigation control is one success story for Jerry Coldiron, CGCS, superintendent for Boone Links Golf Course, a 27-hole facility — as well as 18-hole Lassing Pointe Golf Course in Florence, KY. Lassing Pointe is ranked 29th Best Public Golf Course in the U.S. by Golf Digest and the number one public course in Kentucky. It's also the home to one of the NTEP turf trials scattered throughout the country.

"We continue to convert all 45 holes to OSMAC, a central irrigation control system based on radio communication from The Toro Company," says Coldiron. "We're also looking at Toro's SitePro to help us track equipment and labor. It's all part of our mission to take advantage of the golf boom. We

are upgrading all our facilities to move forward into the next century.

"Before OSMAC, we had controller clocks that required manual adjustments. OSMAC saves us a great deal of time and offers individualized irrigation head control. It even allows me to make adjustments to the system from my home computer." Coldiron says the cost of automating an irrigation system is really not that great compared to the benefits a golf course receives. "People who aren't taking advantage of computer technology are missing out on a great deal."

Coldiron is also pleased with Primo, a plant growth regulator manufactured by Novartis Turf and Ornamentals. "This was our first year to use Primo and I was initially conservative with its use." Coldiron started using Primo for its pre-stress water reduction benefits.

"With 45 holes and a lot of play, the mowing reduction has proven to be another important benefit." Surprisingly, Coldiron says the turf is easier to mow. "Our mechanics believe the combination of going spikeless and using Primo is easier on our reel mowers. We used to get a lot of mower damage from spikes. Primo also tends to soften up the grass."

#### **Decoration Sales**

Ruppert Landscape, Ashton, MD, began a push to spur holiday decoration sales during the summer months to avoid the last minute rush and to offer clients their first choice in decorations. "By booking orders earlier, our customers will find it much easier to locate hard to find or elaborate decorations," says Wendy Bell, director of corporate sales for Ruppert Landscape. "For those of us in the commercial end, we are not going to get the first choice in product if we wait too late in the season."

The early order program offers an advantage for Ruppert employees, too. "By beginning holiday decoration sales early in the summer, we now have a better feel for the number of employees we can hold over through the winter months," says Bell. She also emphasizes the importance that training plays in this program. "This year we had an early June training seminar specifically designed to teach our employees how to sell holiday decorations," says Bell. Installer will get more training in October.

The summer push not only benefits customers and employees, it's a significant financial payback for Ruppert. "Not only do we have a better feel for what we will sell in this year, we expect to dramatically exceed our 1997 decoration sales," says Bell.

#### **Wildflower Mix Popular**

For the past five years, Perennial Wildflower Sod has done an excellent job for Milwaukee County Stadium, home of the Milwaukee Brewers. "We've planted the wildflower sod in raised beds, parking areas and on a hillside too steep to mow," says David Mellor, assistant director of grounds



◀ David Mellor, assistant director of grounds at Milwaukee County Stadium, plants wildflowers as part of management program.

at the stadium. "Hillside plantings help our crew avoid mowing hazards and improve erosion control."

Perennial Wildflower Sod is available from American Sod Corporation, based in Palatine, IL. The sod arrives in 19 x 19-inch flats with a biodegradable burlap backing, making it easy to cut and shape the pieces as needed. Each flat features 19



## 17 good reasons why a Bobcat long-wheelbase loader is the wise buy for landscapers.

**1.** The extended wheelbase on the Bobcat® 763, 773, 863, 873 and 963 skid-steer loaders not only makes for a significantly smoother ride, it also lets you lift heavier loads than a compact wheelbase machine. The operator works in smooth-riding comfort all day long.

**2.** Bobcat loaders are built to be dependable. Landscaper Roy Poirier of Barrie, Ontario, works each of his six Bobcat loaders up to 2,000 hours a year excavating, backfilling, grading, and loading and unloading topsoil and sod. "I can't say enough good about them," he explains.

**3.** Designed with muscle to spare, a Bobcat loader will dig all day — and can easily lift and carry sod, bricks, blocks and other heavy loads.

**4.** A hefty diesel engine with plenty of power makes every Bobcat loader a non-stop work-horse that quickly handles big jobs even in small spaces.

**5.** With brisk travel speeds, Bobcat loaders cover more ground in less time. "The loaders allow us to work faster and take on more and bigger jobs," says Eric Proffitt, co-owner of a landscaping firm in The Dalles, Oregon.



**6.** Besides being brawny and fast, Bobcat loaders have added reach and lift height to clear high-sided truck boxes and hoppers. Loading and unloading is a breeze.

**7.** Bobcat loaders come in sizes to match every job. The 773, for example, is our mid-size lift-and-carry champ. The somewhat larger 863 takes on heavy-duty work with added power and speed, and the extra muscle of the big 873 makes every landscaping job easier, faster and smoother.

**8.** The hydraulic pumps on Bobcat loaders are designed to generate plenty of hydraulic power to operate attachments like Bobcat® Augers, Landscape Rakes, Power Rakes, Trenchers, Tillers, Breakers and more. High-flow options are also available for some models.

**9.** Speaking of attachments, we design and build more than any other skid-steer loader manufacturer.



Depending on model, you can select from some three dozen attachments, each with full warranty and Melroe's unequalled parts and service support.

**10.** Our reliable Bob-Tach™ system makes attachment changes fast, secure and hassle-free. A Bobcat loader operator can easily replace a bucket with Bobcat® Pallet Forks, Landscape Rake, Stump Grinder, Combination Bucket, Backhoe, Auger, Grapple and others — all as quick as a snap.

**11.** Bobcat loaders have drive chains that *never* need adjustment. We use endless loop, hardened steel drive chains configured in a "bow tie" pattern for longer life even in the most rugged conditions — with no periodic, time-consuming adjustments.

**12.** You can forget about axle grease. Bobcat axle bearings are self-lubricating — never need greasing. And our hub design offers great seal protection. Most other loaders require lots of grease — both axle and elbow.

**13.** Serviceability is unsurpassed. Simply open the swing-out tailgate for full access to the engine's checks and fills, filters and battery. And unlike other brands, the lift arms need not be raised to service the machine. Shop time is spent repairing, not gaining access.



**THE bobcat ADVANTAGE**

**14.** The Bobcat belt drive design allows the engine to run slower, resulting in quieter operation, longer engine life and lower fuel consumption — another feature found only on Bobcat loaders.

**15.** Operator training course kits and safety videos, available from your Bobcat dealer, let you train new operators and bring current operators up-to-date with the latest safety and operation functions on Bobcat products. (Some also available in Spanish.)

**16.** Bobcat loaders maintain high resale value year after year because of the Melroe Company's long tradition of quality-built products and after-sale support.

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Lift path:	Radius	Vertical	Radius	Vertical	Radius
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A broadcast wildflower mix enhances seasonal color of Perennial Wildflower Sod.

species of perennial wildflowers and comes with about 100 established, three-inch perennial plants.

"One of my initial concerns was whether the perennial sod would turn into a monoculture of one or two dominate species." However, Mellor finds the species balance continues to be very good — even after five years. To enhance color, the crew broadcasts an annual wildflower mix over the perennials. "Our fans, players and stadium employees really enjoy the wildflowers. We frequently take cuttings and use the flowers for bouquets in the stadium offices." Like any landscape plant material, Mellor notes there is still maintenance with the wildflower sod. "We selectively go in and spray with Roundup to control invasive weeds like thistles," he says.

#### Outsourcing Works

Larry Iorii, president of Down To Earth Inc. in Wilmington, DE, has a success story

that involves a team approach to business.

The company outsources portions of its landscape management services and even shares a warehouse complex with two competitors. "My team approach evolved while I was president of the local Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS). I developed strong business relationships through networking and gradually learned who I could count on for outsourcing," says Iorii.



Teamwork works: L to R, Dave Quillen, Grass Roots, Inc., Tim Schaeffer, Chelsea Flower Gardens; Larry Iorii, Down to Earth, Inc.

"Not every job requires high-end maintenance. For accounts with only mowing, we can often outsource 100 percent of the work. For other job sites, the split might be 50/50, where we perform the detail work and our subcontractors do tree trimming and lawn mowing," explains Iorii. Subcontractors enjoy teaming with Iorii. "I pay all my subcontractors on the 10th of the month. And because I only have three-year contracts with my customers and a contract retention rate of 95 percent, they know it's stable work for them."

Iorii says outsourcing is a two-way street, because he also receives business from competition. "For example, when people think of lawn renovation in this area they think of Down to Earth. My competition frequently will call me to perform lawn renovation. It helps them because they don't have to buy core aeration equipment. In other cases I might sell my consulting services." Iorii believes the team approach benefits his customers, too.

"Even though we're a small company, we can provide our customers with people who specialize in all areas of landscape management."

The team approach even extends to Iorii's shop complex, which includes three warehouses. "I lease two of these warehouses to my competitors. We share a forklift, instead of buying three, as well as sharing a tractor to load up mulch," adds Iorii. "And when I buy supplies like fertilizer, seed and pesticides, I



purchase larger quantities and sell it back to my competitors at cost. We get a better price because of the larger quantities."

#### New Turf Care Facility

At Bluegrass Yacht & Country Club in Hendersonville, TN, the big news is the groundbreaking for a 6,000 square foot turf care facility. The building will have an administrative zone, break room/training room, equipment shop area and ample equipment storage. It's scheduled to be completed during December of this year. "Bluegrass was constructed in the 1950s and has undergone many improvements in the past few years," says Lynn Ray, vice president of Golf Management Group, based in Brentwood, TN. Ray is directly responsible for turf care at three golf facilities, including Bluegrass.



Lynn Ray, vice president of Golf Management Group, expects the turf care center to extend the life of maintenance equipment.

"A turf care center is not as tangible as a new green or tee. Bluegrass should be applauded for its recognition that the facility will improve their golfing experience and extend the life of maintenance equipment," adds Ray. He says discussions to build the turf care center began three years ago. "Don Dixon, greens committee chairman for the club, really helped move the process forward."

"We set out to identify the positives and negatives of building a new facility and to examine it from a cost and function standpoint," recalls Ray. Some dollars were approved to do a feasibility study by the Hawkins Development Company of Nashville.

"We did not take the usual architect/owner/contractor scenario. Hawkins is a design/build firm. They worked with us from a conceptual standpoint that allowed us to develop a sound budget number as we refined our plans."

"Virtual Reality for Landscape Design

"We've been impressed with a new landscape imaging software package we learned about while attending the Green Industry Expo," says Bill Arman, vice president of business development for Environmental Care, Inc., Santa Ana, CA branch. The software package is called Earthscapes, available from Visual Impact Imaging, headquartered in Hopatcong, NJ. Arman says ECI purchased the software and has found it to be a useful sales tool.

Earthscapes software offers imaging, site plan and estimating capabilities. It provides 2,300 high resolution images — featuring an extensive plant library from all climate zones, as well as a modern hard-

scape library. The library also includes water features and lighting. The site plan is a CAD software.

Arman details a classic example of how ECI uses Earthscapes. "Right now there's a large retail center where we do not currently have the business. The property manager casually mentioned he liked an annual display we planted across the street



Earthscapes allows Environmental Care to optimize sales opportunities.

at another property," explains Arman. "We took a picture of his site and scanned the photo into the computer, then used the software to enhance this picture with the same plant treatment." ECI was able to show the property manager how it would look at his property. "The property manager was impressed and we're now in the final proposal stage to obtain the business."

*The author is with Irricom, a communications firm in Austin, TX. He holds a Master of Science degree in horticulture from Oklahoma State University.*

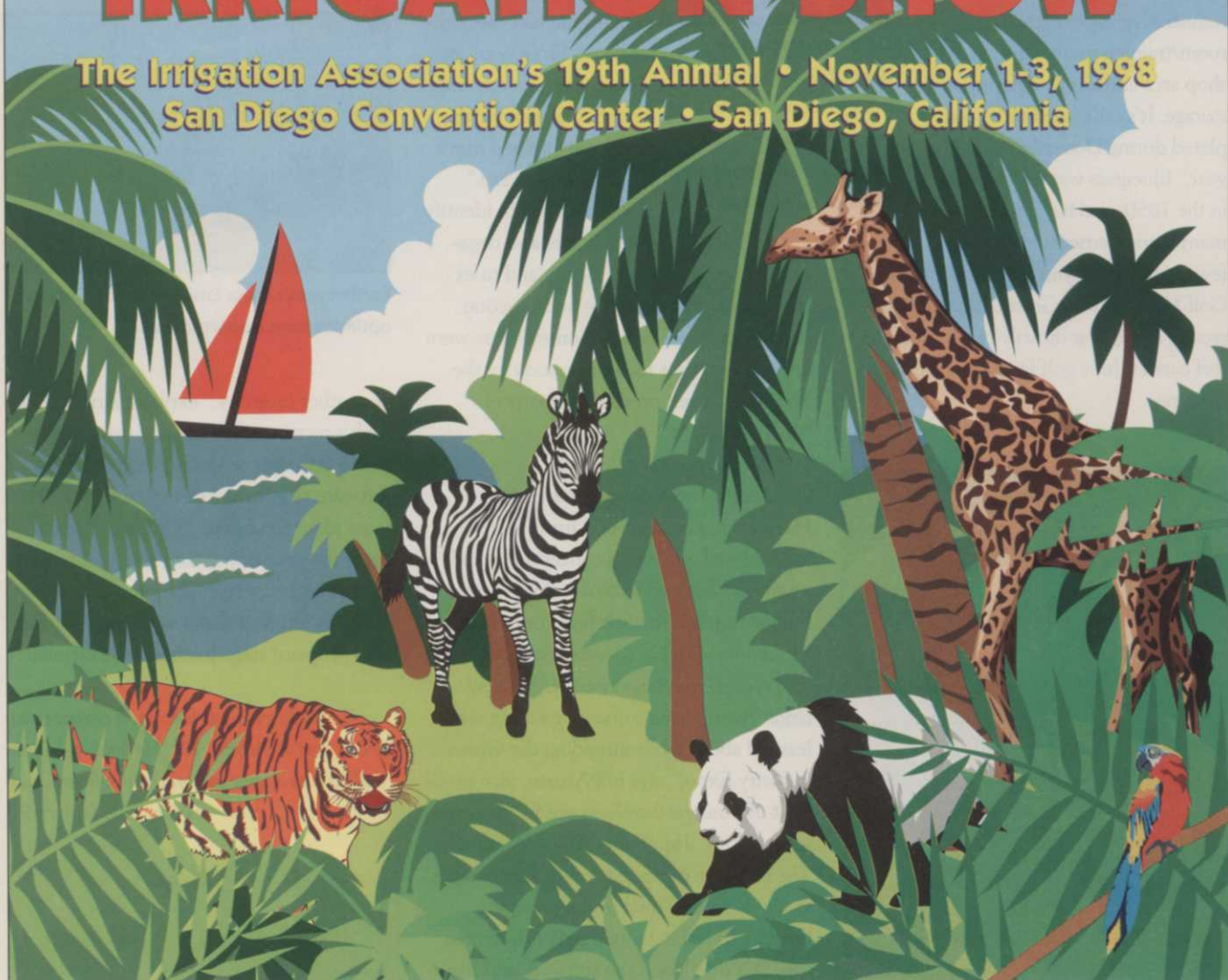


Happy to begin breaking ground: L to R, Don Dixon, Bluegrass Yacht and Country Club Greens Chairman; Garrett Martin, employee of 43 years; John Gardner, course superintendent.



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# Is the site right?

*The three most important considerations for planting success (like buying real estate) are: location, location, location.*

By NANCY STAIRS/  
Technical Editor

**P**lanting, whether trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials or ornamental grasses, is not simply a matter of putting stock or seed where ever the whim strikes you, the customer wants you to, or the landscape designer indicates to you.

Much of the success or failure of landscape elements are due to three important factors: location, location, location.

Location affects virtually every aspect of planting success. When location is broken down into the various elements that affect plant establishment and growth, it may seem like there is a lot to consider. That is true, initially. The trick is to be aware of the characteristics of any potential planting site, and that's something that comes with a little practice.

Practically all of you reading this article can think of situations where what you saw in the landscape caused you to stop in your tracks and shake your head. This means that most of you already have some of the location factors already in-grained, so let's bring them to the surface and review them. This may refresh your memories and possibly remind you of some factors you may have been temporarily overlooking.

#### **Location factors**

**Temperature** - the hardiness zone (or the tolerance to climactic extremes) of a plant indicates its extent or range. It is possible to locate

stock outside the recommended range but you may find the stress conditions increase plant vulnerability to insects, disease, decline etc. When placing a plant at the edge of, or beyond, its hardiness range, try to locate where the extremes are moderated (a sheltered site in the north, for example, could provide a suitable microsite) and realize that any extreme weather or temperatures could kill the plant at some time.

**Light** - whether a plant prefers direct sun or shade, it may be possible to survive where the light is different from its typical requirements. However, this is another source of stress to a plant and may affect vitality as well as the leaves, flowers and/or fruit in size, color and amount. Increased or decreased moisture levels from the sun and heat (or lack of) can weaken plants and make them more prone to pest and disease problems.

**Moisture** - more or less moisture availability is not simply a function of irrigation (or the lack thereof). The drainage of the soil can be a factor, including changes to drainage due to construction (even when not directly beside a plant). In wet locations, a mounded or bermed planting site can help raise the plant to increase drainage. In drier sites, or where no irrigation is likely to occur, mounded plantings may dry out too quickly. The moisture needs of a plant and the moisture available should be in the same ballpark. This is a common stress factor for landscape plants.

**Soils** - a lot of factors come under the category of soil, such as texture and structure, drainage, pH, and the soil requirements for a particular plant. Knowing the characteristics of the soils, including the extent of compaction, before planting can help reduce problems, as well as the need for remediation later on.

**Other effects** - these cover a broad range, from pollution sensitivities of a



Different locations can mean different problems. This flowering dogwood grow best in partial shade; in this location with full sun and no mulch it may be prone to borers; in too much shade and/or mulch, dogwood anthracnose may be a problem.

plant, winter salt use, vandalism, mechanical damage, mature size and spacing, proximity to buildings, parking lots or other hardscapes, and local pest and disease problems. There is little point in planting a pollution sensitive plant on a median of a highly traveled road or in a parking lot, even in a "good" growing site, which is rare in itself.

Planting for the present visual effect without considering the mature size and potential for crowding is short-sighted and can lead to problems, in both above-ground and below-ground competition. On more than one occasion I have seen Colorado blue spruce planted practically in a doorway of a building and wondered if anyone had given any thought to that phenomenon known as growing. Or seen a line of young trees, which are spaced nicely for the present or if they were to remain small trees, but are much too close for the large, mature trees they will become.

#### **Stress and the single plant**

Interestingly enough, when you consider these factors, you're actually well on your way to a major preventive component of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or Plant Health Care (PHC) program. Trying to make the best decisions and choices by taking into account the limitations of your plants and the site factors before planting will minimize stress upon plants once installed in the landscape. We can't always predict how well a plant will do on a site, but we can try to stack the deck in its favor.

The issue of location, and the site factors which are a part of location, is important mainly due to the stresses that can result from poor plant placement. Basically, a stressed plant is one which is not growing under optimum conditions, so that the plant spends more energy reserves for survival and less energy is available to store carbohydrates, extend roots, and put on top growth. Stress can be short-term (acute), like a drought, or long-term (chronic), like lack of nutrients. Chronic stress can lead to plant decline which can result in an unattractive plant or death.

Stress can be compared to a person being run down from lack of sleep or poor eating habits. The body is less able to withstand and fight off germs, but likely to recover. In chronic situations with poor nutrition or lack of health care, there may be more problems and even something relatively minor can become a serious problem.

In a similar way, healthy, vigorous plants are better able to withstand temporary droughts, and disease and pest problems; while plants which are



**These trees have chronic stress from a number of factors: pollution, poor soil, soil compaction. The excess moisture may be a short-term or long-term stress depending on how long it sits on the site.**



**Repeated damage can be considered chronic stress. If mechanical damage, even mower damage which occurs a single time, is likely, take additional steps to protect the tree so that the location does not prove fatal.**

weakened are subject to attack by secondary agents. For example, a tree weakened by drought may be more susceptible to attack by borers. Indeed, some pests are attracted to weakened plants.

You can't control all the factors affecting plants in a landscape situation, but you can reduce some of the negative impacts by considering the plant requirements and the effects of location.

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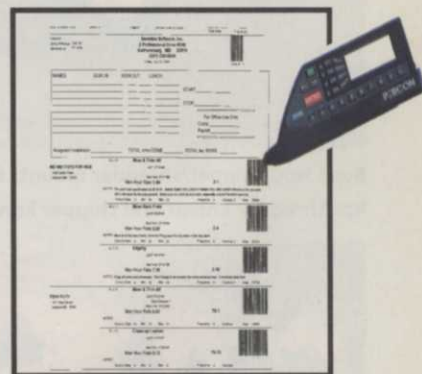
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Bandit Industries offers three different 12-inch chippers.



Bush Hog chipper/shredder mounts by 3-point hitch to tractor with at least 18 hp. Shredder knives and chipper knives are machined from tool steel.



Danuser's new Chipper/Mulch Systems turn branches into mulch.

## CHIPPERS

Look at cutting power and portability, but don't overlook ease of use.

By CURT HARLER/ Contributing Editor  
There is more than just horsepower to consider when shopping for a chipper/shredder. When the call goes out for a new chipper, look for one with a big mouth.

While everyone is in love with power, perhaps more important than sheer cutting ability is the unit's ability to take in material at the head-end. That is, how large a bunch of branches can workers feed through the chopper's throat at one time? Armsful of leaves and twigs or slender tree limbs with spreading branches call for a chipper with a wide mouth for easy filling.

Every product listed here conforms to safety standards. However, it is important to check all equipment (including mowers, chippers, saws) after purchase, to be sure your workers have not done an "aftermarket" adjustment that overrides the necessary safety features.

Again, the big mouth comes into play — a chipper with a wide, clutter-free opening is less apt to clog and to devour a rake handle that has been shoved inside to unplug a jam.

Consider where the unit will be used. Will you use it for small jobs around residential sites? Does your business get involved in a lot of heavy tree or brush removal? Will a tractor be available, permitting use of higher-powered pto-driven equipment, or does the job demand portability?

A truck-mount is important for firms with a lot of small cleanup jobs to do. A big mouth does not mean a loud mouth. A quiet chipper will be more acceptable in neighborhoods where landscaping noise has become an issue and with workers who are near the machine on a regular basis.

### CHIPPERS/SHREDDERS

AGRI-FAB  
217-728-8388  
[www.agri-fab.com](http://www.agri-fab.com)

Powered by an 8-hp Tecumseh engine, the 45-0249 Chip-N-Vac from Agri-Fab, Sullivan, IL is well suited to handling light material on any job.

Linked to the Agri-Fab Vac with a 6-inch spiroflex hose, it has the power to reduce branches and twigs to fine mulch while the vacuum makes the litter disappear. Capacity of the unit is 32 cubic feet.

Circle No. 250

#### BANDIT INDUSTRIES

800-952-0178

[www.banditchippers.com](http://www.banditchippers.com)

The line of 12-inch hand-fed disc-style chippers from Bandit Industries, Remus, MI comes in three models: 150XP is the basic 12-inch capacity chipper; 200+XP has faster feed rate; and the 250XP with even larger feed opening, larger wheels and more powerful hydraulic feed motor. Machine's wide opening and aggressive feed system crushes, compresses and pulls trees, limbs and brush into the chipper. Lots of options, including 16 gas and diesel engine options and a hydraulic lift for top-feed wheel (making it easier to position larger material into the system) are available.

Circle No. 251

#### BUSH HOG

334-872-6261

[www.bushhog.com](http://www.bushhog.com)

There are 36 free-swinging shredder knives and four chipper-knives machined from tool steel in the Bush Hog chipper/shredder line. The CS-100P mounts by 3-point hitch to any tractor with 18 hp or better. The CS-130T is powered by a 13-hp Honda and has electronic ignition, oil alert, and a 2-wheel trailer for highway towing. The CS-180T is this chipper's big brother, featuring a 18-hp Honda engine, 1500 pound torsion axle, 3-gallon detachable gas tank for convenient refueling and all the features on the 130T. Leaf grates, spout extender and vac kits available.

Circle No. 252

#### DANUSER

573-642-2246

Danuser's new Chipper/Mulch Systems turn broken branches into a quality, usable mulch. The pto-driven units from the Fulton, MO firm start with two models using an 18-inch diameter flywheel and handling up to 4-inch diameter tree limbs. In the 24-inch class, there is both a pto and

trailer model that handle 6-inch diameter limbs. Each pto model operates with a minimum 18 hp. The self-contained trailer model in photo uses a 25-hp Kohler engine. Danuser produces chippers for a number of distributors.

Circle No. 253

#### BCS AMERICA

704-846-1040

[www.bcs-america.com](http://www.bcs-america.com)

The BCS chipper shredder fits on all BCS tractors that are 7 hp or larger. Made in Matthews, NC, it features 28 hardened steel, free swinging shredding flails in the chipper box. Higher hopper has a vertical drop between opening and shredder box, making for safer operation. The heavy-duty, 37-pound chipper flywheel has one hardened chipper blade. Unit is easy to transport and the pto comes from the factory with four screens: three-eighths inch, one inch, and 1.125 inch and a roller bar screen for rougher shredding.

Circle No. 254

#### CRARY COMPANY

701-282-5520

[www.crarycompany.com](http://www.crarycompany.com)

A 140-pound, 20-inch diameter x 1.25-inch thick rotor disk with doublebanded belt drive is at the heart of the 73454 4-inch chipper from Crary, West Fargo, ND. Four high-chrome content reversible, heat-treated chipper blades handle limbs up to 4-inches in diameter. Blades are set at a 45-degree angle to help self-feed limbs into the unit's 27x28 hopper. The 43454 unit requires a Category I PTO drive 3-point hitch. Also available are the 73413 and 73420 towable models.

Circle No. 255

#### GOOSSEN INDUSTRIES

800-228-6542

[www.goossen.com](http://www.goossen.com)

Chew up limbs as large as 5-inches in diameter with the Goossen Chipper/Shredder, made in Beatrice, NE. Unit also shreds leaves or brush. Three units are available: the CS1000, 540 pto-driven; the gas-powered CS5100 with its 13 hp Honda engine; and the CS6000 with an 18 hp Honda engine. All feature hinged housing allowing

easy access to the cutting drum, shredder cover to prevent kick-back, and a folding safety door on the chipper chute. A blower or vacuum attachment option is available.

Circle No. 256

#### INGERSOLL EQUIPMENT CO.

920-582-5000

[www.ingersoll-inc.com](http://www.ingersoll-inc.com)

All-hydraulic chipper-shredder from Ingersoll Equipment Co., Winneconne, WI has 24 reversible, hardened steel blades to make cleanup jobs fast and easy. It can chip limbs up to three-inches in diameter. The extra large, top feed hopper is steeply sloped, perfect for processing leaves, corn stalks and other brittle material. Unit is built for durability and strength.

Circle No. 257

#### MACKISSIC, INC.

610-495-7181

The SC260-16 Chip N Shred by MacKissic, Parker Ford, PA is highway towable with an independent Flexride suspension. Its 48-inch free-swinging hammers and 4-inch rapid feed chipping make quick work of debris. It is powered by a 16-hp twin cylinder Vanguard engine available in manual or electric start. Unit features a rotor engagement system with load-free starting and overload



#### SC260-16 Chip N Shred

protection. Also available is the Brute which chips logs up to 5-inch diameter and handles branches up to 1.5 inches in diameter.

Circle No. 258

#### MANTIS

800-366-6268

[mantisgardentools.com](http://mantisgardentools.com)

The Mantis BSV (blower-shredder-vacuum) makes quick work of landscape cleanup jobs. It has a 4-blade metal shredder, located in front of the fan to reduce clogs, which reduces twigs, leaves and pine needles to mulchable refuse at a 12:1 ratio. The generous 35-inch intake tube means workers need not stoop as they work. Made in Southampton, PA every BSV engine



#### Mantis BSV for light shredding

is tested at the factory with carburetor set to comply with EPA Phase-1 and California Emission Requirements. A 17-ounce see-through tank allows easy fuel supply check. Unit comes with "cruise control" so the trigger does not have to be depressed all the time.

Circle No. 259

#### MTD

330-225-2600

[mtdproducts.com](http://mtdproducts.com)

A three-way feed on the MTD Chipper features rake-in, drop-in dedicated chipper chute. The three-inch diameter chipping capacity leads to a set of 12-inch replaceable flails and two steel blades. End result is 10:1 reduction of branches, twigs and other debris. Unit is powered by an 8 hp engine and features a one gallon fuel tank, 10-inch by 4-inch pneumatic tires. Pivoting hopper and fully integrated handle make this an easy unit to use. Optional tow bar kit is available.

Circle No. 260

## **PARKER SWEEPER** **630-627-6900**

Versatile Vac-CS Chipper/Shredder from Parker, Addison, IL cleans a 30-inch vacuum path while it chips, vacuums, shreds and bags in one pass. The self-propelled unit reduces debris 11:1, so materials can be packed into less space. Convenient chipper chute draws twigs, branches and other debris in easily and safely. Optional hose kit allows unit to reach



**Versatile Vac-CS from Parker**

tough-to-access areas under trees, between bushes, or in flowerbeds.  
Circle No. 261

## **SIMPLICITY MANUFACTURING** **414-284-8669** **www.simplicitymfg.com**

It's easy to start the Model 6/14E chipper/shredder from Simplicity, Port Washington, WI. The 5.5 hp chipper has a simple 12-volt electric start. It reduces yard waste, leaves, husks, pine cones and other debris into mulch and makes twigs and branches into chips. Free-swinging triangular shredding hammers along with J-hammers reduce at a 20:1 ratio. Unit stands 34-inches tall and is easy to move. Optional vacuum kit allows reaching under shrubs or in window wells.  
Circle No. 262

## **STEINER TURF EQUIPMENT** **330-828-0200** **www.steinertrurf.com**

The CS312 chipper/shredder from Steiner, Dalton, OH handles branches up to four inches in diameter. It takes any kind of unusable brush, lawn debris, twigs and



**Steiner chipper**

branches and reduces them into an attractive mulch. The CS312 has four hardened chipper knives, 36 shredder sections and a flywheel type rotor. Optional blower is available. Unit quick-hitch mounts on the front of a Steiner 430 tractor.  
Circle No. 263

## **SUNDANCE** **970-339-9322**

The Kid II yard and wood waste grinder from Sundance, Greeley, CO is made for big jobs. A hydraulic drive feeding system controls the flow of material to a 1500-pound rotor with its 44 or 84 pointed, heat-treated hard surfaced hammers. It can handle up to 15 tons of yard waste per hour and chops limbs, pine cones, shrubs, vines, green or dry wood, grass or palm fronds. Unit is totally enclosed for safe operation. It is powered by a John Deere 4039DT diesel rated at 95 hp at 1900 rpm. It can discharge material up to 40 feet.  
Circle No. 264

## **TILTON** **800-447-1152**

There are 10 models of Yard Shark units available from Tilton, Alpharetta, GA. Units shred and chip materials at high velocity for fast, environmentally safe, efficient disposal. All units can handle up to 3.5-inch diameter materials. Designed for performance and value, they range from the 5 hp Briggs & Stratton powered YSB5S with two hardened tool steel knives and 12 reversible serrated flail blades to the YS9H-TR with its 9 hp Honda engine and 16 flail blades.  
Circle No. 265

## **VC MARKETING** **973-992-8514**

Chop up all kinds of vegetation and organic debris with the Wood-Pro AVP from VC Marketing, Roseland, NJ. It handles anything from leaves and weeds to 6-inch diameter brush and limbs through one hopper. Large hopper and throat openings permit easy feeding of materials. Branches need only minimal trimming before going through the 30-inch rotor where material is reduced to small chips. Available as 18-hp or 22-hp self-propelled models or as a tractor PTO unit.  
Circle No. 266

## **VERMEER**



**Wood-Pro AVP in 18- or 22-hp**

## **888-837-6337** **www.vermeer.com**

The 935 brush chipper from Vermeer, Pella, IA can handle wood debris up to 9 inches. Exclusive AutoFeed II design gives easy, reliable feeding and operation. The 15-gallon fuel tank lets the machine work all day with any one of three engine options: 35 hp Wisconsin gas, 42 hp Deutz diesel, or 50 hp Perkins diesel. Discharge chute rotates 270 degrees to direct chips away from workers feeding machine. Feed-control bar is located at the in-feed chute for easy operation.  
Circle No. 267

## **Woods Equipment Company** **815-732-2141** **www.woodsonline.com**

The Model 5000 Chipper/Shredder is a combination machine which chips debris up to 5 in. and shreds debris up to 1 in. Models 8000 and 8100 are medium duty chippers which can chip debris up to 8 in.



**Model 5000 Chipper/Shredder**

with 360° discharge tube rotation. The models are PTO driven with 12 to 30 hp for the 5000, and 25 to 50 hp for the 8000 series as well as a three point hitch for use with compact tractors.  
Circle No. 268



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# Define your niche in tree service market

*Read how these successful tree service companies use specialized equipment, like chippers, profitably.*

By RICHARD A. YACH

**I**n the competitive tree industry all tree service contractors are driven to lower their operating costs.

This is a day-to-day management issue, one faced by owners every time a job is bid,

have purchased only the equipment that they use efficiently. By serving only a chosen market segment, they have not added certain pieces of equipment to their fleet that they feel would sit idle too much of the time.

#### **All things to all people?**

Wright Tree Care of Clive, Iowa, has been in business since 1933, and is reported to be the largest and premier tree service company in the metropolitan area. Their parent company, Wright Tree Service, chose to focus on large multistate line clearing for the utility industry in 1986, and Wright Tree

Care, headed by Linda Wright, geared its service to the residential and commercial markets in 1993.

Wright Tree Care, in a short amount of time, has consolidated a customer base of more than 2,500 customers, providing a range of services including tree diagnosis, insect control and landscape consulting along with the yard maintenance services of lawn care and tree trimming.

But even though Wright offers a variety of services, the company does not want to be all things to all tree customers. By making market-defining choices, it is able to maximize its equipment usage.

"Although it may not sound like it, we have limited the range of services we provide," says Linda Wright. "For example, we do not go looking for land clearing, total tree removal or stump cutting business. We do own a small stump cutter so that if a customer requests it, we have a unit that will get

through the backyard gates to get to a stump that needs removal, but we don't consider that to be a normal part of our business. We've found that for an entire large-tree removal job, some companies have to send six or seven men, and three trucks to the site: one to haul the chipper, one to haul the stump cutter and one log loader with a crane. Not only will



Kramer uses a crane to access tree work in locations where target and damage concerns are high.

every time a crew is sent on site, every time a chipper and chip truck leave the yard. Is there any way to manage equipment use, maintenance and purchases to keep overall operating costs in line in the face of rising labor costs, taxes and insurance, and diminishing profits?

Some tree service companies have carefully defined the market they want to serve and by doing so

two of the three trucks sit idle most of the day, but the stump cutter sits idle a good share of the time as well. For this reason, we prefer to subcontract out any crane work and stump cutter work. This way, we can concentrate on tree trimming and get 500 to 700 hours a year out of each of our five brush chippers."

Joe Kramer, owner of Kramer Tree Specialists, Inc., West Chicago, IL, services 4,400 residential, commercial and municipal customers in the western suburbs of Chicago. He meets a

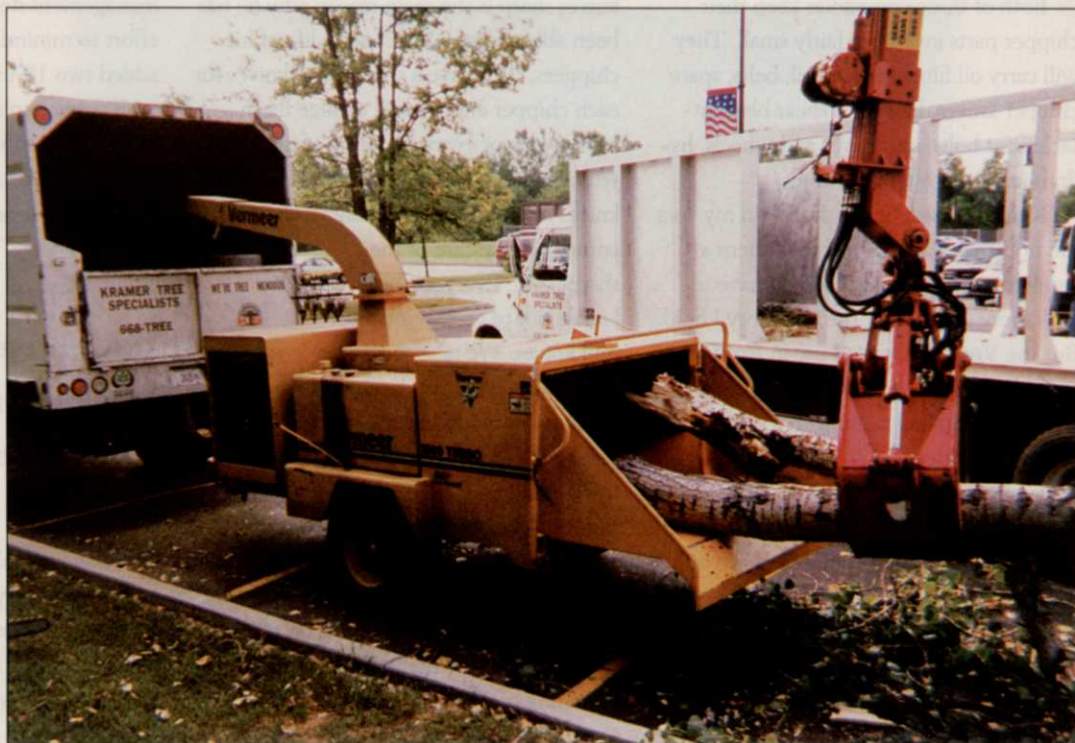
broad range of tree-service needs, working hard to maximize the use of his tree-trimming and grinding fleet that includes four brush chippers, two aerial trucks, four chip trucks, a tub grinder, a crane and two log-loading grapple trucks.

In business since 1974, Kramer brings a no-nonsense management philosophy to his business. "I try to integrate the use of all of my chipping and grinding machines in an effort to minimize two major cost areas," he says. "I try to minimize labor time handling logs, and the cost and maintenance of log loaders.

"I have had to make a conscious decision to stay out of markets where I would not be cost competitive," adds Kramer. "Given the equipment that I have available, I have calculated that I can be competitive on some small three- to four-acre land-clearing jobs, but not in larger land clearing where people who aggressively pursue that business have the equipment suited for handling bigger material."

#### **Practice preventive maintenance**

Both Wright Tree Care and Kramer Tree Specialists make a concerted effort in training their crews to take every step possible to extend the life of their brush chippers. They can only plan on a use-



ful life of 10 years for a 12-inch chipper and thus keep their machine costs down over the useful life of the chipper—if their foremen and operators pay close attention, without fail, to daily maintenance.

Rick Hanson, general foreman for Wright Tree Care, also serves as equipment manager. He places a lot of responsibility for daily maintenance on the shoulders of his crew foremen. "When I visit a work site, I can tell in an instant if the brush chipper has not received its proper daily greasing," states Hanson. "I have chipped a lot of brush, and I know that checking the hydraulic fluid level, greasing the cutter wheel on these disc chippers, checking the oil, checking the air cleaner restriction indicator and checking the belts are absolutely essential. It may sound corny, but if we are good to these chippers, they will be good to us. We know that keeping these brush chippers up and running is the only way to remain profitable."

Wright Tree Care goes so far as to wash the brush chippers on a regular basis—something you might not ordinarily expect from a tree care firm. As Linda Wright puts it, "washing chippers may seem unnecessary, but we do it for two reasons. Not only have we found that our employees will take better

**A larger capacity chipper reduces the time required for a crew to handle logs on-site. A grapple eases handling and increases productivity.**

care of cleaner machines, but the job foreman can spot a hydraulic hose leak a lot faster and prevent costly breakdowns."

Both of these companies keep their chipper parts inventory fairly small. They will carry oil filters, engine oil, belts, spare chipper knives, knife and shear blade attachment bolts, spare tires and wheels, hydraulic oil and hydraulic hoses.

Kramer states, "If the dealers in my area did not stock parts, or if it took them a week to get something, I would have to look more carefully at the inventory I hold. But the Vermeer dealer I use in Aurora has everything plus the expertise to get my equipment up and running in a matter of hours. I consider that an efficient use of my resources and theirs."

#### **Sharp knives speed trimming**

The most important maintenance task that a tree service firm can do to lower equipment costs and get the most useful life possible out of a chipper is to keep chipper knives sharp on its disc chippers. There is nothing that will slow up a trimming operation faster and create more engine problems than dull knives. They are the number one cause of reduced lifetime for brush chippers.

Dull knives lead to unproductive labor time as operators stand feeding logs through the chipper when they should be getting more material to feed into the machine. Dull chipper knives also waste time because they produce stringy chips that tend to clog discharge chutes, causing job interruptions.

Dull knives increase engine wear and decrease engine life. When chipper knives are dull, there is extra energy required to chip the log.

These forces go back through the machine's bearings and the drive shaft, creating vibrations that produce greater engine wear. If operators continue to "lug down" the engine in an effort to force material through dull knives, the acceleration of engine wear can be exponential.

Kramer Tree Specialists, Inc., and Wright Tree Care train operators and crew foremen to recognize the signs of dull chip-

per knives and to get them changed before the chipper goes out again.

Kramer says that keeping chipper knives sharp is the main reason why he has been able to extend the useful life of his chippers. "We have a spare set of knives for each chipper and we will change them every week or every 10 hours of use, whichever comes first. We will rotate the knives and have a sharpening service that comes by take care of the sharpening. Everyone here knows not to go to a job with dull knives. We take special care to check the gap between the chipper blade and the shear bar or anvil. We keep this gap at the absolute minimum prescribed in the operator's manual and always check it. The way we look at it, the smaller the cut the blade has to make the less the load is on the engine. This one maintenance job will lower operating costs and extend chipper life."

#### **Chip it, don't log it**

Managing a tree-trimming equipment fleet efficiently can be summed up succinctly in the phrase "Haul chips, not logs!" Both of these tree service firms—albeit at different levels—employ this philosophy. When Wright Tree Care re-started its residential business in 1993, it had two eight-inch chippers. Its workers soon found that they were loading their chip and lift trucks up with logs that the smaller machines could not chip.

As the customer base grew, both companies brought two 12-inch chippers into their fleets. According to Linda Wright, "These purchases were a step up for us. With our type of work, moving up to this class of chipper was a benefit for our company. As we get into bigger trees, we can now break down more of the tree into chips rather than haul logs. If you don't have a large enough chipper, you waste time sorting logs you can chip from those you can't. Hauling logs put a lot more stress on the employees and on two of our under-sized chip trucks. Plus, the tipping fees are a lot less for chips at the recycling yard than

they are for logs. It made sense to increase the size of chippers we operate."

Kramer Tree Specialists, Inc., takes this management decision even further. In an effort to minimize on-site labor, Kramer added two 18-inch chippers to his fleet.

Kramer explains, "These Vermeer 1800's limit substantially the number of logs my crews have to handle on site. This makes their time much more productive."

*"I run everything through this tub grinder and have spent years building up my mulch business"  
--Joe Kramer, West Chicago, IL.*

The way we look at our tree removal business is that every major branch of an old tree will have part of it that you might not be able to chip. But, the larger the chipper you can get on site, the fewer logs you handle on-site with a log loader and haul off site. There have been cases in the past when there have been fifteen 10-foot logs from a single tree. Chipping these makes sense to me."

Chipping logs on the job is also part of Kramer's business plan. He operates a new TG400AL Vermeer tub grinder on his yard creating marketable landscape chips. "I run everything through this tub grinder and have spent years building up my mulch business," describes Kramer. "This tub grinder runs through chips like water. The way I look at it, putting chips rather than logs through it puts less stress on it, increases its useful life, and reduces its tooth and hammer replacement bills."

Defining your market and the business you want to be in, maintaining equipment properly, conducting operator training, using sharp knives and concentrating on the efficient use of the machinery in your fleet extend your fleet's useful life and pay off at your bottom line. **LM**

*The author is a technical writer based in Des Moines, Iowa. Technical information: Vermeer Manufacturing Co., Pella, Iowa*

## GARDEN PALS:

# bulbs & perennials

Enhance next spring's color now with well-planned combinations of annuals and perennials.



Hyacinths and heather make a pleasant combination.

**f**all is the traditional season for planting tulips, daffodils and other bulbs that bloom in the spring. But fall is also a perfect time to plant such perennial "bulb buddies" as forsythia, heuchera, cowslip, hosta, golden feverfew, Myosotis (forget-me-not), ivy, Nepeta (catmint), and primroses and others.

Used in smart combinations, bulbs and perennials can create an especially intriguing spring border that serves as a springboard to a super summer landscape.

### Mix and match

When planning for early spring color, look to combine early flowering bulbs with perennials that produce early foliage and/or early flowers. The early, long-flowering miniature *Narcissus* 'February Gold,' for example, offers yellow flowers in exactly the same hue as *Forsythia intermedia* 'Golden

Bell.' This narcissus also teams up smartly with another perennial, yellow cowslip (*Primula veris*). Cowslip, in turn, is a good match for other narcissi such as the diminutive yellow favorite 'Minnow' and the elegant 'Louise de Coligny.'

For a sophisticated color combo, consider blue lungwort (*Pulmonaria angustifolia*) and the later flowering pale yellow *Narcissus* 'Jenny.' Both plants thrive in semi-shade and tolerate moisture well.

### Complementary colors

Bulbs combined with perennials in a landscape are used to complement, not dominate, the planting. The idea is to create a rich tapestry of color, form and texture. Avoid perennials that will spread too quickly and overpower their partners.

While huge beds of tulips or hyacinths were once mainly used to cut blazing swaths of color



Combine 'Queen of the Night' tulips, heuchera, wall flower 'Bowles Mauve' in one container.

that bloomed and then faded across the landscape, now they are often used in more subtle combinations to create evolving scenarios in the spring landscape. Shape, height, color, texture and bloom times should all be considered.

There's also a practical side to all this. After the flowers of spring bulbs fade, the remaining foliage is left to wilt and die back. While necessary, if the bulbs are to flower again next spring, this withering phase can be a let down in the landscape.

Planting with rapidly growing leafy ground covers such as hosta, leadwort, ferns and heuchera can be the answer. Camouflaging with appropriate perennials is a win-win situation – and pretty too. A planting of *Hosta tardiana* 'Halcyon' becomes something quite special with the blue hyacinth, *Muscari* 'Blue Spike,' peeking through. And

why not add tall, elegant green and white *Tulipa* 'Spring Green' to the mix for extra measure? After bloom, the tulips' fading foliage is easily masked by the fast growing blue-green leaves of the hosta.

#### The season marches on

Remember when mixing bulbs and perennials that shade-loving perennials can be combined with many sun-loving bulbs. The bulbs are at their best while the branches of deciduous trees are without leaves. Wooded areas often receive plenty of spring sunshine. By the time the early summer sun heats things up – and the spring-blooming bulbs are asleep for the season – the tree leaves have come out, providing plenty of shade for perennials.

Bulb and perennial combinations can be permanent additions to garden beds and borders. The bulbs should be planted a lit-

tle deeper, up to nine inches for tulips, and left in the ground after flowering. Each fall, some slow release bulb food, or a top-dressing of compost or other organic fertilizer will help them perform in spring.

#### Be Creative

Many combinations, even unusual ones can be perfectly pleasing. Consider clusters of tall, nodding white snowflakes (*Leucojum aestivum*) amidst the lovely leaves of *Geranium* 'Johnson's Blue.' Plant the white starbursts of *Tulipa turkestanica* amid the red-leaved wood spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides* 'Purpurea'). Groundcover plantings of smoky mauve heathers come alive in spring with surrounding sweeps of cobalt blue grape hyacinths (*Muscari armeniacum*).

Later in the season, brighten things up with *Tulipa* 'New Design' combined with brilliant blue *Scilla siberica* and peachy-pink and yellow primroses. For pink-on-pink, pair button-headed, daisy-like pink daisies (*Bellis perennis* 'Pomponette') with deep wine-colored, fringed *Tulipa* 'Burgundy Lace.' Or try May flowering camassias such as *C. leichtlinii* 'Alba,' which are perfect in a shady spot combined with ferns. For a spectacular summer combination, plant the great *Eremurus* (foxtail lily) with plant-buddy *Alchemilla* (lady's mantle).

#### Companionship contained

In containers, too, bulbs and perennials enjoy life together. Choose permanent residents first – perennials that will live serve as foliage or flower anchors. Bold hostas, giant ferns or pewter- or magenta-leaved heuchera are good examples. Now add dramatic seasonal "come and go players." An especially sophisticated springtime look pairs silver-leaved *Heuchera* 'Pewter Moon' with near-black *Tulipa* 'Queen of Night,' mauve wall flowers, and tall, willowy yellow cottage garden gems.

These are just a few suggestions; there are hundreds more. For as spectacular as bulbs are when planted by themselves, the pleasure is doubled when a little perennial companionship is introduced.

Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center  
www.bulb.com

# Events

## OCTOBER

### 20-23 Southwest Turf-grass Conference

Convention and Civics Events Center, Ruidoso, NM. Contact Curtis Smith at (505) 275-2576

## NOVEMBER

### 3-6 Penn State Golf Turf Conference

Nittany Lion Inn, State College, PA. Call (814) 863-3475, fax (814) 863-3479 or email: sah15@psu.edu

### 4-6 Eastern Regional Nurserymen's Association Expo Fall '98

NEW Atlantic City Convention

Center, Atlantic City, NJ. Call (800) 376-2463 or fax (301) 990-9771 or website: www.erna.org

**5-7 TCI Expo '98** Baltimore, MD. Call the National Arborist Association at (800) 733-2622 or fax (603) 672-2613

### 10-13 NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition

OnCenter, Syracuse, NY. Call NYSTA at (518) 783-1229 or (800) 873-8873, fax (518) 783-1258 or email: nysta@capital.net

### 11-13 Turfgrass and Ornamental Seminar

Call Midwest Regional Turf Foundation at (765) 494-8039, fax

(765) 496-2926 or website www.agry.purdue.edu/agronomy/turf/turf.htm

### 14-17 GIE

Opryland Hotel Convention Center, Nashville, TN. For details contact: ALCA (800) 395-9668 or website: www.alca.org; PGMS (410) 584-9754, fax (410) 584-9756 or website: www.pgms.org; PLCAA (800) 458-3466 or email: plcaa@atlcom.net

### 17 & 19 Building With Trees Workshop

Tampa, FL, the 17th, Shreveport, LA, the 19th. Call the National Arbor Day Foundation at (402) 474-5655

## DECEMBER

### 1-3 North Central Turf-grass Exposition

Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, IL. Contact Illinois Turfgrass Foundation at (312) 201-0101 or fax (312) 201-0214

### 3-5 Landscape Lighting Institutes

Heronswood Garden, Seattle, WA. Contact Dan Frering, Lighting Research Center at (518) 276-2503, fax (518) 276-2999 or email frerid@rpi.edu

### 7-9 Washington Turf and Landscape Show

Meydanbauer Center, Bellevue, WA. Contact Perry Tripplett at (253) 925-5638 **LM**



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## SUPPLIERS CORNER

**Bayer Corporation Agriculture Division** announced four transitions and promotions in the Garden and Professional Care Unit. Trevor Thorley appointed senior vice president, sales and marketing, Crop Protection Business Group; Rich Burns promoted to director, GPC professional sales and marketing; Michael Ruizzo, appointed central area sales manager, GPC professional sales and marketing; and Jorge Moreno, promoted to marketing product specialist, GPC professional sales and marketing. Also, Byron Reid has been hired as research product manager of the GPC pest control market.

**Carswell Distributing Company** is expanding distribution west to include Texas, with an office and warehouse facility in Carrollton, TX. The office will have full-time sales and support staff and offer full marketing and distribution services

to independent retail dealers throughout TX. Besides Great Dane Power Equipment and Robin Outdoor Power Products, other Carswell lines include Eaglestar, Winston Pro, McKissic, Giant Vac, Road Boss, Legend Grills, Merry Tiller, Mountain Embers and Green Mountain outfitters. A year ago, Carswell expanded its distribution to include IA, KS, NE, MN, ND and SD.

**Glenmac** has a new website with product information on the complete line of Harley equipment. The site offers information on Harley dealers, customer service and inquiries, questions and comments, links and company profile. [www.glenmac.com](http://www.glenmac.com)

Kevin Hattori is the new Director of Public relations for **Growth Products, Ltd.** He will be responsible for the identification and pursuit of

potential publicity opportunities for the company, will oversee all copywriting and function and will be the company's liaison with the media, industry associations and universities.

The SolarMower, from **Husqvarna Forest & Garden Co.**, is presently on display at the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in NYC, as part of its 'Under the Sun' outdoor exhibition. The exhibition runs until October 25.

**John Deere** has a new PowerGard® extended protection plan for utility tractors, offering more flexible time and hour options and expanding eligibility to include compact utility tractors and pre-owned tractors. For more information call 888/256-3337 and select option #4.

Lebanon has signed a letter of intent to purchase the profes-

sional products division of Pursell Industries, including the ParEx brand name and the IBDU™ trademark, with October 1 being the tentative closing date. Lebanon has also become the main marketer of PennMulch as a result of its recent acquisition of PennTurf Products and New York Pellet Products, Inc.

**Rain Bird** is partnering with Kansas State University to provide irrigation equipment to the new Colbert Hills Golf Course project in Manhattan, KS. Scheduled to open in 2000, Colbert Hills will be the first PGA Tour-managed collegiate course in the US.

**Simplicity Manufacturing, Inc.** has been awarded three patents for yard care product designs: the Torsion Bar Suspension; the Ride-On Mower Steering; and a way to control airflow across the inlet nozzle of the company's chipper shredder vacuum, to better pick up yard debris [www.simplicitymfg.com](http://www.simplicitymfg.com)

**Toro** has announced a new marketing strategy to expand the distribution of Toro-branded mowers to selected home centers. The plan is to build on the ability of dealers to combine sales and superior after-sale service by matching dealers with home centers to begin a partnership of customer service. [www.toro.com](http://www.toro.com)

# Info center

## VIDEOS AND LITERATURE FOR THE GREEN INDUSTRY

**BULB.COM...** This site from the Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center has been newly expanded for the fall flower bulb planting season. The site has a revamped Spring Bulb Guide (fall planted, spring-blooming bulbs), with descriptions, cultural and planting tips for bulbs from A to T (Allium to Tulip); an all-new Summer Bulb Guide (spring planted, summer-blooming bulbs); an upcoming new Landscaping Guide, for tips on mass plantings in landscapes; and two Technical Service Bulletins from the International Flower Bulb Center of Hillegom, Holland: *Guidelines for the Utilization of Flowering Bulbs as Perennial (Naturalized) Plants in North American Landscapes and Gardens*, and *Guidelines for Utilization of Fall-Planted Spring & Very Early Summer Flowering Bulbs in North American Landscapes and Gardens*.

**How to identify and control water weeds and algae...** Applied Biochemists has updated and expanded its guide to water management. The 124-page booklet features new photography and information on management alternatives for aquatic plant control on lakes and ponds, plus expanded information on treatment of irrigation systems. For information on book availability (cover price \$9,95) contact Applied Biochemists at 800-558-5106.



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Circle No. 142 on Reader Inquiry Card

## Some serious thoughts on job security



BRUCE WILLIAMS,  
CGCS  
Los Angeles CC

**B**ruce Williams, CGCS, superintendent at the Los Angeles Country Club, realizes that job security is one of the foremost concerns of most golf course superintendents.

He shared some of his observations on the subject on GCSAA's busy website this past spring, and because of the importance of the topic we asked him for additional comments. The following are some of them, edited for space.

Becoming a superintendent is the goal of many young people. Working conditions are attractive. It can pay well too, even for individuals

possessing associate degrees or completing 12-short courses. A salary of \$50,000-plus isn't unusual for a capable superintendent.

But there is competition for these jobs. And more is coming.

There may be as many as 2,000 students in turf programs in the United States. The law of supply and demand dictates that the more superintendents there are, the lesser the likelihood that greater demand and higher salaries will be out there. Many superintendents already feel the market is flooded.

Is it time to rethink the reason for giving out numerous scholarships each year to attract more people to become golf course superintendents?

Another issue is compensation.

A superintendent with a lot of experience at a club can make a pretty good salary. In fact, a superintendent could eventually command the largest salary at a club. While clearly a good thing, this could cause a problem. What seemed like a reasonable salary to one board may seem unreasonable to the next one. Boards and general managers, like superintendents, come and go.

Also, the further the superintendent gets away from the "honeymoon" phase with the club and

its board, the greater the negative response can be to suggestions for improvements that, even though they're temporary, would close or tear up the course, or even restrict carts or play.

None of this is likely to change much soon. Most superintendents can't count on job security. That's why it's valuable for all of us superintendents to understand as much as we can about the life and career cycles of this demanding profession.

### [SUPERS ON COURSE]

GCSAA members will decide three officer posts and elect three directors from a field of 10 candidates for the 1999 board of directors during the annual meeting, Feb. 13, 1999, during GCSAA's 70th International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando.

For President: **David W. Fearis**, CGCS, Blue Hills Country Club, Kansas City, MO.

For Vice President: **R. Scott Woodhead**, CGCS, Valley View Golf Club, Bozeman, MT.

For Secretary/Treasurer: **Michael Wallace**, CGCS, Hop Meadow Country Club, Simsbury, CT; and **Tommy D. Witt**, CGCS, StillWaters, Dadeville, AL.

For Directors: **David S. Downing II**, CGCS, Wild Wing Plantation, Conway, SC; **Joseph H. Emanuel**, CGCS, Hurstbourne Country Club, Louisville, KY; **James J. Nicol**, CGCS, Hazeltine National Golf Club, Chaska, MN; **Timothy T. O'Neill**, CGCS, Country Club in Darien, Darien, CT; **Samuel R. Snyder VII**, CGCS, Hercules Country Club, Wilmington, DE; and **Mark Woodward**, CGCS, Dobson Ranch and Riverview Golf Courses, Mesa, AZ.



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A view from one of the tees. The steep sides dropping off from the tee are kept in natural vegetation.

# Maintaining a shop and a course

By BRIDGET FALBO

**F**or a golf course superintendent, the layout and design of the maintenance shop can be almost as important as the design of the course. Luckily for Mariana Butte Golf Course superintendent Ron Mielke, he was on board with the City of Loveland, Colorado, prior to course construction and helped with the design of the shop.

Mariana Butte is set in the foothills of the Colorado Rockies bordering the Big Thompson River and features a backdrop of the snow covered peaks of Rocky Mountain National Park. The public golf course opened in 1992, and made *Golf Digest's* list of 100 Great Value Golf Courses and also received the magazine's four-star rating.

Mielke had worked as superintendent for Loveland's Olde Course for eight years before moving to the site of the Mariana Butte course and supervising construction under the direction of architect Dick Phelps in late 1990.

## Limited maintenance space

When it came time to plan the maintenance area, Mielke found they had limited space in which to build a maintenance shop (as happens with most golf courses). It also needed to be constructed in such a way as to be out of sight of the expensive homes that would encircle the course.

Landscape berms were constructed surrounding three sides of the shop, to act as a natural barrier to noise and unsightly equipment. The berms, however, turned into an attribute of the shop area rather than just taking up precious space. They

were cut in half and backed by concrete storage bins, which Mielke says have become very useful in storing sand, gravel, top dressing and even equipment.

"You can't see it from the road and it's contained here within the walls," explains Mielke.

With his experience working on other golf courses, Mielke knew many details he wanted to incorporate into the shop design, such as an equipment hoist, meeting room and out-of-the-building pesticide storage. But he also gathered information from other superintendents whenever he had the chance. He's more than satisfied with the result, but says it's still a work in progress. The landscaping hasn't been completed yet, for instance.

The front end of the maintenance shop houses comfortable work spaces --offices

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for Mielke, his assistant, the irrigation system computer and an approximately 18-ft. by 28-ft. open room filled with long tables and chairs for lunches and meetings. A dry erase board covers the entire back wall, prominently displaying the work schedule. A large map of the whole course mounted on the wall helps Mielke and his team plan the day's work activities.

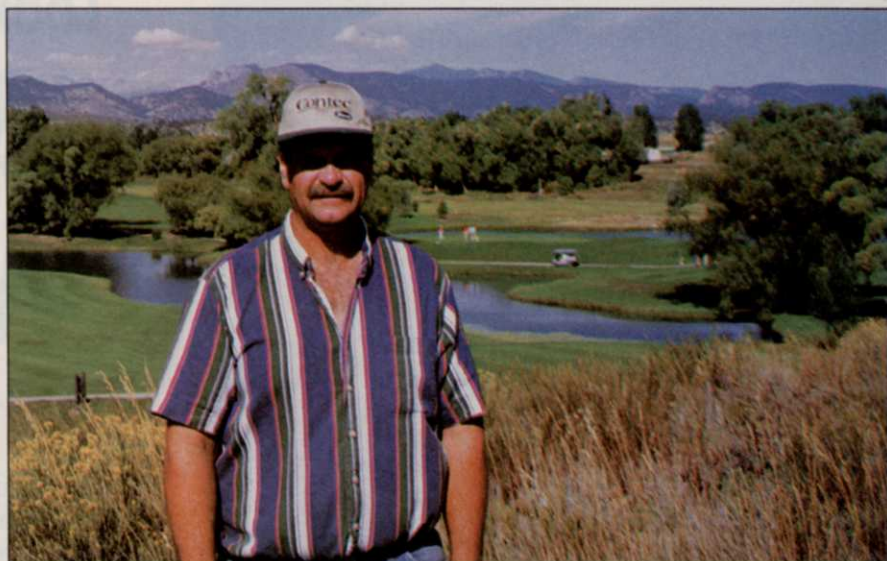
The 44-ft. by 48-ft. heated maintenance room provides the space required for the mechanic to keep the equipment in tip-top shape. One of the best features of the shop, according to Mielke, is the small enclosed room with its own exterior ventilation for the mechanic to use specifically for grinding. Closing the room off keeps the dust from getting into bearings and motors and alleviates the noise problem, says Mielke.

The state-of-the-art chemical storage area in a separate, all-metal enclosed building has an automatic containment feature below the floor in case of a pesticide leak. By housing the chemicals in a separate facility, in case of a fire, the safety of workers and firefighters is increased and it will keep the chemicals from contaminating a nearby lake.

#### **Water recycling**

In the blueprint stage, Mielke knew the course would eventually purchase a water recycling system for cleaning equipment, so the building was specifically designed to handle this type of system. A small room next to the equipment area houses the water recycling equipment, which was installed this past spring. Just outside, a covered wash bay with drainage was built where the equipment is cleaned, to keep rain water from entering the recycling system.

Last year Mielke and mechanic Dave Batt toured golf courses looking at their water recycling systems. What they found was that many people were dissatisfied with different parts of their systems. Mielke used that knowledge in deciding to buy a new system from Hydrodynamics, Inc., of Florida not yet used by other



**Ron Mielke has been in the golf course business all his life, so he knew what he wanted when it came time to build a maintenance shop at the Mariana Butte Golf Course.**

courses. (The water recycling system costs approximately \$28,500, according to the manufacturer.) They installed the system in the spring of 1998.

"After a couple of months of trial and error, we've worked the bugs out of it," says Mielke. "It's working out very well."

The equipment cleaning process begins with using compressed air to blow the dry grass off the equipment; the clippings are then recycled into compost. The unit is brought into the wash bay and spray washed with a pressure washer. The water and debris fall into a sump, which is then pumped through a screened cart that separates out the grass clippings and other large debris. Next, the water is pumped through a series of four clarification tubes to remove very fine grains of sand and silt. Then it passes through an ozonation chamber which uses ultraviolet light to kill bacteria in the water. From there it returns to the cistern and recirculates. That makes up the primary loop.

In the secondary loop, the water is removed from the primary loop cistern, pumped through a series of cloth filters covered with diatomaceous earth and then

through an activated charcoal filter to remove gasoline, pesticides and oils. Then it fills a water reservoir which feeds the pressure washer, and some water returns to the wash bay to be recycled again.

Mielke figures he saves up to 4,000 to 5,000 gallons of water a month. He believes it's just a matter of time before state and federal regulations require such recycling to avoid contaminated water runoff into lakes and streams near golf courses.

Proper irrigation is a key to maintaining this course. Mielke explains they are very conscientious about their water use and only water as much as the course needs to keep the turf in playing condition.

Since irrigation is so important, Mielke and other employees will be able to access pump station information at home via computer link. This will enable staff to monitor pump station stats 24 hours a day.

#### **Course maintenance**

Because of the very low humidity, the course suffers from few disease problems. Mielke handles any disease with a curative approach rather than preventative, except in the case of snow mold. In the latter part of October, he applies Scotts Fungicide 9

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because the grass is still actively growing. Then around Thanksgiving he applies Scotts FF2 to last through the winter. Last winter, Mielke said the course was only closed for three to four days because of snow, but some winters snow may cover the turf for over a month.

Since its beginning, the course has been popular for tournament play, especially for shotgun and scramble type tournaments. The course generally schedules 15 or more tournaments per month.

Mielke finds the toughest part of his job to be fitting in necessary maintenance activities, such as top dressing, so as not to interfere with tournament play. Since the entire course has to be ready by 7:30 a.m. for shotgun tournament play, the crew starts mowing at 5:30 a.m.

The crew mow the tees and fairways on the front nine on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and the back nine Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. They mow greens and set cups daily. They mow roughs after these are completed. Paul Mason, assistant superintendent at Mariana Butte, schedules the maintenance staff of 14 seasonal employees and five full-time employees.

As with most golf courses, finding good employees can prove difficult. The Loveland course is helped by the fact that nearby Fort Collins

Concrete storage units built into the back of earth berms which surround the front and sides of the maintenance building.

The course purchased water recycling equipment from Hydrodynamics, Inc. of Florida.

Pressure washing equipment in the wash bay; the water runs into a sump and begins the water recycling process.



is home to Colorado State University, which has a course of study on turf management. Students studying in the program often find summer jobs with Mariana Butte. But having that employment pool nearby also comes at a price. "We lose half our crew when school starts," says Mason. "And sometimes we're still mowing greens as late as Thanksgiving."

As might be assumed because of its location in the foothills, some of the tees must be mowed with hand mowers because of the severe elevations, describes Mason. On the 16th hole, the tee has an

almost vertical drop of 40 feet. Many of the slopes themselves are kept in native vegetation to alleviate extra maintenance and reduce irrigation needs.

Working with the steep elevations and tournament timing offer the biggest challenges to managing this course near the Rockies, but Mielke says meeting those challenges provides great satisfaction and every new problem that crops up just makes his day more interesting. *The author is a freelance writer in Minneapolis who writes about the green industry.*



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## 'Certifying' out the unqualified?



*Ron Hall*

**RON HALL**  
Managing Editor

**J**ohn is mad as hell and he called me up to tell me that he's not going to take it anymore.

John's a landscape architect with a degree to prove it. He says he's been in the landscape business for 23 years. For the most part, he's been glad he chose this career. But lately something's been bugging him, specifically the lack of a program to require "certified" landscapers on projects. Most of his aggravation concerns the activities of what he considers unethical landscapers on new commercial projects.

He tells me that he'll start his own landscape association if he has to help solve this problem. It will focus on "certifying" qualified landscapers. That way, he says, he and other legitimate and like-minded landscapers can get the respect that they deserve. They'll build an accreditation program as recognized and respected by the public as other professions and the skilled trades.

Hey, if a construction project requires plans drafted by a registered building architect and work provided by registered tradesmen, why not require a "certified" landscape contractor too?

John says that he's belonged to several landscape associations and they're fine for getting to know other good landscapers. But none of them really address the main problem which, he insists, is low-ball operators that move in, snatch up projects, and generally gum up the works for established firms.

The veteran landscaper, who works in the Memphis area, says it's way too easy to get into the landscape business, and what state or local regulations there are, usually aren't enforced.

John, I empathize with you. Really I do because I feel exactly the same way. But, you have to understand where I'm coming from.

**[LANDSCAPE]**

**PAGE 4L ▶**

**Autumn's push for profit**

**PAGE 8L ▶**

**ALCA Student Career Days news**

When I look at the number of young people pouring out of our nation's journalism schools, I wonder how anybody is ever going to make a living in journalism. There are too many of us reporters and editors in the marketplace already.

I sometimes think that if we could just reduce the supply of these ambitious, fresh-faced fledglings those of us already in the business could guarantee ourselves more job security and command better salaries.

Does the journalism industry need a certification program so that just accredited editors and reporters could work? No, I don't think so.

John, you can certainly argue that there's a big difference between being a low-ball landscaper and a journalist just breaking into the business; I'll grant you that.

But, ultimately the success of any industry is not decided by who is excluded, but by embracing and improving the knowledge of those within it. And particularly those at the bottom; they need it the most.

Certification isn't a gate to keep competitors out.

Again, I look at my own chosen profession.

I look at all of these young people, so eager to start their careers and make their marks, few of whom are qualified to be a journalist, not yet anyway... just as I wasn't almost 30 years ago.

**Agree/Disagree? Comments/Questions? Column Suggestions? Let Ron Hall know at 440/891-26263. Fax: 440/891-2675. E-Mail: rhall@advanstar.com LM**

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# Autumn's final push for profit

**C**ommercial landscape management in a true four-season climate is often restricted to operational functions and sales efforts traditionally associated with a growing season of approximately eight months. By October and November, many landscape contractors are "putting their accounts to bed." While preparing a landscape for its winter ordeal can require a significant effort, and it can also generate sales revenue beyond the typical seasonal maintenance contract.

This additional revenue can strengthen a contractor's position financially as the season closes, but I would like to suggest an alternative approach to landscape management operations in the second season. This is a practical approach to managing the winter season, as well as a different philosophical approach to serving the needs of our clientele. This approach continues to generate revenue for the landscape contractor throughout the winter (snow or no snow), while providing the property owner or manager with new tools for marketing the exterior of their property over all 12 months of the year. When planned for properly and executed professionally, these winter marketing efforts will result in a true


win/win scenario for both contractor and client.

#### **Investment from both sides**

What we sell, and ultimately provide, is a means by which property owners and managers can differentiate themselves from their competition. This allows the investment made in any commercial property to be earning year-round dividends. Why then, because of the winter weather, should such efforts to be shelved for four months out of every 12? We are asking our clients to allow the investment in their landscape to stop performing over that four-month period. Regardless of climate, today's leaders in the service industries are the ones who provide opportunities for their clients to market more aggressively when their competition is hibernating.

Here is an example:

In July, you invested \$100,000 in a 60-month bank certificate of deposit in an effort to generate regular income from the monthly interest on your balance. Five months into the first 12-month period, your banker calls to inform you that your account will not be earning interest for the months of December 1998 through March of 1999; and



*Autumn can be a time of anxiety and pressure for professional landscape contractors as they squeeze in work before winter.*

By KEVIN T. BLOCK

the same will hold true for that four-month period in each of the next five years. Your reaction would be predictable. Few of us would allow our investment to stagnate for four months without generating any type of income. We may determine that such news from our banker or broker warrants a search for a new financial planner.

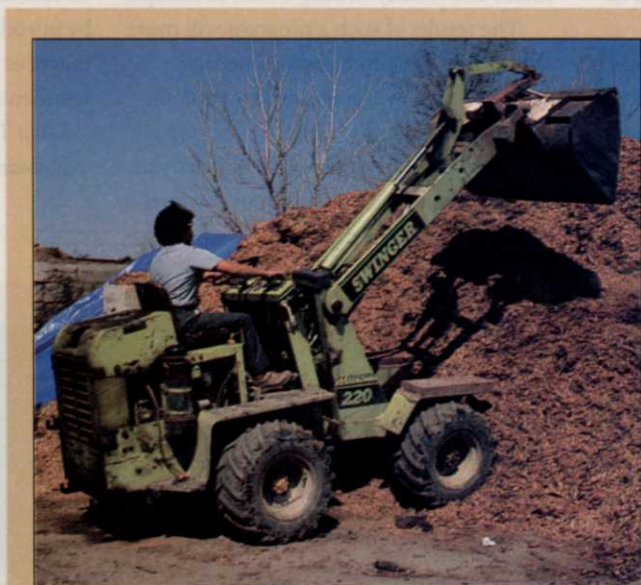
Similarly, if you allow your client's real estate investment to stagnate for four months out of every year, you are also allowing your investment into their landscape, in both time and money, to stagnate as well. You may also be unwittingly allowing that to happen if you do not have some type of winter marketing program set forth for their landscape. An oversight like this can foster an inaccurate perception of the value of a property's grounds, and may jeopardize your position with your client when such a perception is formed during what is traditionally considered your "off season."

Explain to your client that just as you would turn to an investment banker or other such financial expert to help you manage your money most effectively, teaming up with an experienced, proactive landscape contractor to evaluate and impact the condition of their landscape investment will assist them in promoting their landscape 12 months a year. If you are successful, the revenue generated from these operations will probably exceed your original expectations, and will most certainly come as a welcome supplement to the unpredictable revenues of snow removal services.

#### **Make a visible impact**

Certain established horticultural practices offer additional work and provide your client with a way to enhance and protect the winter landscape in very practical ways. Some of the more common practices are:

- ▶ Applying gypsum to turf bordering walks and curbs to minimize salt damage;
- ▶ Using antidesiccant sprays to protect plant surfaces from wind and salt vapor;
- ▶ Mowing late-fall turf to prevent fungus development;
- ▶ Wrapping shrubs to protect from winds and frost/thaw cycles;
- ▶ Using sound snow removal techniques to minimize damage from piled



**Good quality mulch can be a decorative benefit as well as a horticultural benefit by protecting root systems from harsh temperature changes.**

snow, plows, etc.;

- ▶ Having a plan for using ice melt compounds to avoid over-application in the throes of a winter storm.

#### **Promote your investment**

Once the preventative and practical operations of winter landscape marketing are in place, you can implement the aesthetic and artistic elements of winter marketing. Take advantage of winter's natural appeal with a focus on complementing the season's natural colors and textures. Combine preventive horticultural procedures with common decorative practices to highlight an otherwise stark winter scene:

- ▶ Cut pine boughs laid over bare flower beds, raised planters, etc., provide winter color, a pleasant scent and insula-

tion from severe cold.

- ▶ Decorative mulches such as shredded hardwood, nut or seed shells or wood chips offer color and texture in highly visible areas.

▶ Cut limbs from plants with brightly colored bark (i.e. red and yellow twig dogwood), artistically arranged in planters and flower beds offer beautiful displays in an otherwise barren corner of the landscape.

- ▶ Plant bulbs in fall for spring flowers.

#### **Let your investment shine**

The hottest and most effective opportunity for showcasing the beauty of the winter landscape is by installing decorative lighting. This has evolved into much more than simply hanging lights in the trees during the holidays. The phenomenal resurgence of holiday decorating provides a way of drawing attention to a landscape or property, creating a marketing tool that is being used in many markets as a year-round promotion. The revenue generated by such operations will augment snow removal efforts, since the maintenance of the lighting can often

be performed by the same individuals, often in the same visit to a property.

The key to a successfully installing decorative lighting lies in the planning and execution of a comprehensive approach, considering the impact both aesthetically and practically:

- ▶ Install the display according to a thorough plan for installation and maintenance, highlighting certain plants or areas of the landscape while protecting and minimizing plant or property damage.

▶ Start planning early to avoid the seasonal rush. Install early to accommodate the delicate nature of lighting materials and facilitate installation in warmer temperatures.

- ▶ Establish a budget and plan the display accordingly. A more concentrated use

of lighting in fewer areas or plants will have a greater impact than spreading out your light inventory over a broader area just to get the coverage. Provide your client the means to maximize the budget and still provide the greatest impact.

► Review installation techniques with your client prior to installation to ensure that the final look and durability of the display meets expectations. Loosely hung lights or scattered strings will draw more negative attention to your display than no lights at all.

► Inspect the installation from all angles to be aware of the image you are sending out to the marketplace. Using higher quality lights and meticulous attention to installation detail will result in a much more impressive display than a poor qual-

ity lights installed haphazardly.

#### Reaping what you sow

While we must acknowledge many of winter's limitations on marketing of commercial landscaping, we do not need to concede entirely. Early preparation in the way of evaluating, creating and implementing results in an aesthetically pleasing, horticulturally sound and visually striking winter landscape.

The results of such a program will more than justify the effort you will expend:

- the good will generated by your efforts on your client's behalf;
- the consistent off-season contact you have with your client while your competitors have no means to do so;

- the extra income that keeps employees busy and productive;
- the overall benefits to our industry by offering problem-solving, proactive services.

In today's competitive marketplace, astute property owners and managers are continually searching for that added advantage separating their property from their neighbor's. A progressive landscape contractor will consistently be in demand by introducing clients to new concepts and practices that will keep their and your investments working all year round.

*Kevin T. Block is the vice president, Sales & Marketing for Church Landscape Company, Inc., a LandCare USA Company*



Tulip or other flowering bulbs provide good fall work for a contractor and wonderful early spring color in the landscape.

Decorative lighting provides a great opportunity to keep workers busy between snowfalls, and provides a wonderful source for marketing impact for your clients.



Snow removal services are the most common of operations used to offset winter expenses and supplement customer contact. Have your program and your equipment up to speed.



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## Student Career Days to build the best staff

The ALCA Student Career Days event, coming up March 18-21, 1999, at the University of Kentucky's Lexington Center in Lexington, KY, is the landscape contracting industry's best source of talented, qualified employees, as well as an unequaled opportunity for companies to demonstrate their value as a place to work and their commitment to the future of the industry. Competing students represent leading educational programs in interior/exterior and horticulture/landscape contracting programs at colleges and universities across the country.

There are several ways for landscape contractors to participate in Student Career Days: serve as event judges, interview and recruit students and/or sponsor events.

This is the largest gathering of potential landscape employees entering the job market. Companies seeking interns and new employees may interview the industry's best and brightest students on the spot during Student Career Days, at the Career Fair element of the event. Companies may see potential future employees at work, as students from all across the country participate in 25 landscape-related competitive events, led by sponsoring landscape contractors and directly related to the needs of the Green Industry.

Sponsoring an event gives landscape contracting companies visibility among potential employees and participating educational institutions. Companies may sponsor events such as personnel management, sales, exterior/interior design, irrigation trouble-shooting, wood construction, truck and trailer operations and more. As a bonus, sponsorship includes one complimentary registration fee. ALCA will list sponsors in the on-site program and in various national and local publications, and sponsors may display information about their companies and products during the event. Judges assess student performance during the event.

Companies also may participate as observers. Observers get to see students in action and network with them on a casual level. Fees include receptions, lunch on Saturday and the Saturday dinner and social event.

For registration information, contact ALCA by phone at 800-395-2522 or 703-736-9666; fax, 703-736-9668; or e-mail: meetings@alca.org.

## NAA schedules National Day of Service

On Saturday, October 17, almost 500 arborists from throughout the US will be providing tree care at Arlington National Cemetery as part of National Arborist Association's "National Day of Service." This event will also mark the five-year anniversary of NAA's last National Day of Service.

Twenty-five work zones have been identified as requiring tree care, including areas near the Women in Military Service Memorial, the grave of President John F. Kennedy and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Arborists will be climbing trees ranging in height from 20 feet to over 80 feet, providing fertilization, cabling and pruning and other preservation and maintenance work. Says Paul Wolfe, NAA President, "The dollar value of the work is estimated to be approximately \$400,000."

Arlington National Cemetery and its 14,000 trees will benefit from this event both from the work, giving longer life and beauty to the trees, and by giving tribute to the over 230,000 people who are buried in Arlington's 612 acres.

The event is free of charge and open to the public.

## Dolibois installed as 1998-1999 ASAE Chairman

Robert J. Dolibois, CAE, executive vice president of the American Nursery and Landscape Association (ANLA), Washington, DC, was installed August 18 as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) during its annual meeting. He is the 79th individual to hold the top elected leadership post for ASAE, the world's leading professional organization for people who manage trade associations, individual membership societies and voluntary nonprofit groups.

As ASAE's chief elected officer, Dolibois will direct a 34-member board that develops overall policy for the 24,000-member organization.

## Southeastern Flower Show seeks landscape entries

The Southeastern Flower Show, with its 1999 theme "Salute to the Century—a Farewell with Flowers," is accepting entries from both amateur and professional gardeners and landscapers. The show is set for Feb. 17-21 in Atlanta.

The juried show features six competitive divisions, plus a Junior Division for youths 18 years and under. Entry forms, along with an exhibitor's guide and jr. exhibitor's guide with rules and regulations are available by calling the show office at (404) 888-5638.

Organizers expect about 50,000 visitors to the four-and-one-half acre gardening exhibition and 35 professionally landscaped gardens.



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October 1998

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- 01  250 GOLF COURSES (Also fill in questions #3 & #4)
- 02  255 Landscape Contractors (installation and maintenance)
- 03  260 Lawn Care Service Companies
- 04  265 Custom Chemical Applicators (ground and air)
- 05  270 Tree Service Companies/Arborists
- 06  275 Landscape Architects
- 07  280 Land Reclamation and Erosion Control
- 08  285 Irrigation Contractors  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 09  290 Sports Complexes
- 10  295 Parks
- 11  300 Right-of-Way Maintenance for Highways, Railroads or Utilities
- 12  305 Schools, Colleges, Universities
- 13  310 Industrial or Office Parks/Plants
- 14  315 Shopping Centers, Plazas or Malls
- 15  320 Private/Public Estates or Museums
- 16  325 Condos/Apartments/Housing Developments/Hotels/Resorts
- 17  330 Cemeteries/Memorial Gardens
- 18  335 Hospitals/Health Care Institutions
- 19  340 Military Installations or Prisons
- 20  345 Airports
- 21  350 Multiple Government Municipal Facilities  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 22  355 Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture
- 23  360 Sod Growers/Turf Seed Growers/Nurseries
- 24  365 Dealers/Distributors/Formulators/Brokers
- 25  370 Manufacturers  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which of the following best describes your title? (fill in ONE only)

- 26  10 Executive/Administrator- President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Director of Physical Plant
- 27  20 Manager/Superintendent- Arborist, Architect, Landscape/Grounds Manager, Superintendent, Foreman, Supervisor
- 28  30 Government Official- Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
- 29  40 Specialist- Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
- 30  50 Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Is your golf course: 31  A Public 32  B Semi Private 33  C Private 34  D Hotel/Resort 35  E Municipal

4. If you work for a golf course, how many holes are on your grounds?  
 36  1 9 37  2 18 38  3 27 39  4 36+

5. How many acres are maintained at your facility? \_\_\_\_\_

6. SERVICES PERFORMED (fill in ALL that apply)

- 40  A Mowing 45  F Turf Fertilization 50  K Paving, Deck & Patio Installation
- 41  B Turf Insect Control 46  G Turf Disease Control 51  L Pond/Lake Care
- 42  C Tree Care 47  H Ornamental Care 52  M Landscape Installation
- 43  D Turf Aeration 48  I Landscape/Golf Design 53  N Snow Removal
- 44  E Irrigation Services 49  J Turf Weed Control 54  O Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7a. Do you specify, purchase or influence the selection of landscape products?  
 Yes  No

7b. If yes, check which products you buy or specify: (fill in ALL that apply)

- 55  1 Aerators 62  8 Herbicides 69  15 Sweepers
- 56  2 Blowers 63  9 Insecticides 70  16 Tractors
- 57  3 Chain Saws 64  10 Line Trimmers 71  17 Truck Trailers/Attachments
- 58  4 Chipper-Shredders 65  11 Mowers (reel/rotary) 72  18 Trucks
- 59  5 De-icers 66  12 Snow Removal Equipment 73  19 Turfseed
- 60  6 Fertilizers 67  13 Sprayers 74  20 Utility Vehicles
- 61  7 Fungicides 68  14 Spreaders

8. Do you have a modem?  Yes  No

101	113	125	137	149	161	173	185	197	209	221	233	245	257	269	281	293	305
102	114	126	138	150	162	174	186	198	210	222	234	246	258	270	282	294	306
103	115	127	139	151	163	175	187	199	211	223	235	247	259	271	283	295	307
104	116	128	140	152	164	176	188	200	212	224	236	248	260	272	284	296	308
105	117	129	141	153	165	177	189	201	213	225	237	249	261	273	285	297	309
106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
107	119	131	143	155	167	179	191	203	215	227	239	251	263	275	287	299	311
108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
110	122	134	146	158	170	182	194	206	218	230	242	254	266	278	290	302	314
111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
112	124	136	148	160	172	184	196	208	220	232	244	256	268	280	292	304	316



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October 1998

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in ovals as shown: ●

1. My primary business at this location is: (fill in ONE only)

- 01  250 GOLF COURSES (Also fill in questions #3 & #4)
- 02  255 Landscape Contractors (installation and maintenance)
- 03  260 Lawn Care Service Companies
- 04  265 Custom Chemical Applicators (ground and air)

- 05  270 Tree Service Companies/Arborists
- 06  275 Landscape Architects
- 07  280 Land Reclamation and Erosion Control
- 08  285 Irrigation Contractors
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- 09  290 Sports Complexes
- 10  295 Parks
- 11  300 Right-of-Way Maintenance for Highways, Railroads or Utilities
- 12  305 Schools, Colleges, Universities
- 13  310 Industrial or Office Parks/Plants
- 14  315 Shopping Centers, Plazas or Malls
- 15  320 Private/Public Estates or Museums
- 16  325 Condos/Apartments/Housing Developments/Hotels/Resorts
- 17  330 Cemeteries/Memorial Gardens
- 18  335 Hospitals/Health Care Institutions
- 19  340 Military Installations or Prisons
- 20  345 Airports
- 21  350 Multiple Government Municipal Facilities
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- 22  355 Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture
- 23  360 Sod Growers/Turf Seed Growers/Nurseries
- 24  365 Dealers/Distributors/Formulators/Brokers
- 25  370 Manufacturers
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which of the following best describes your title? (fill in ONE only)

- 26  10 Executive/Administrator- President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Director of Physical Plant
- 27  20 Manager/Superintendent- Arborist, Architect, Landscape/Grounds Manager, Superintendent, Foreman, Supervisor
- 28  30 Government Official- Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
- 29  40 Specialist- Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
- 30  50 Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Is your golf course:

- 31  A Public 32  B Semi Private 33  C Private 34  D Hotel/Resort 35  E Municipal

4. If you work for a golf course, how many holes are on your grounds?

- 36  1 9 37  2 18 38  3 27 39  4 36+

5. How many acres are maintained at your facility? \_\_\_\_\_

6. SERVICES PERFORMED (fill in ALL that apply)

- 40  A Mowing 45  F Turf Fertilization 50  K Paving, Deck & Patio Installation
- 41  B Turf Insect Control 46  G Turf Disease Control 51  L Pond/Lake Care
- 42  C Tree Care 47  H Ornamental Care 52  M Landscape Installation
- 43  D Turf Aeration 48  I Landscape/Golf Design 53  N Snow Removal
- 44  E Irrigation Services 49  J Turf Weed Control 54  O Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7a. Do you specify, purchase or influence the selection of landscape products?

- Yes  No

7b. If yes, check which products you buy or specify: (fill in ALL that apply)

- 55  1 Aerators 62  8 Herbicides 69  15 Sweepers
- 56  2 Blowers 63  9 Insecticides 70  16 Tractors
- 57  3 Chain Saws 64  10 Line Trimmers 71  17 Truck Trailers/Attachments
- 58  4 Chipper-Shredders 65  11 Mowers (reel/rotary) 72  18 Trucks
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105	117	129	141	153	165	177	189	201	213	225	237	249	261	273	285	297	309
106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
107	119	131	143	155	167	179	191	203	215	227	239	251	263	275	287	299	311
108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
110	122	134	146	158	170	182	194	206	218	230	242	254	266	278	290	302	314
111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
112	124	136	148	160	172	184	196	208	220	232	244	256	268	280	292	304	316

## New formulation ProStar 70WP

AgrEvo has developed a new formulation of ProStar 70WP which contains 40 percent more active ingredient than the original 50WP formulation. The higher concentration of active ingredient means less product is required for



the same control as well as smaller-sized packaging. With 38 percent less carrier and more wetting agents and dispersants, which enhance fungicide distribution, ProStar 70WP is easier to mix and handle.

For more information contact AgrEvo at (610) 584-1139 or

Circle No. 269



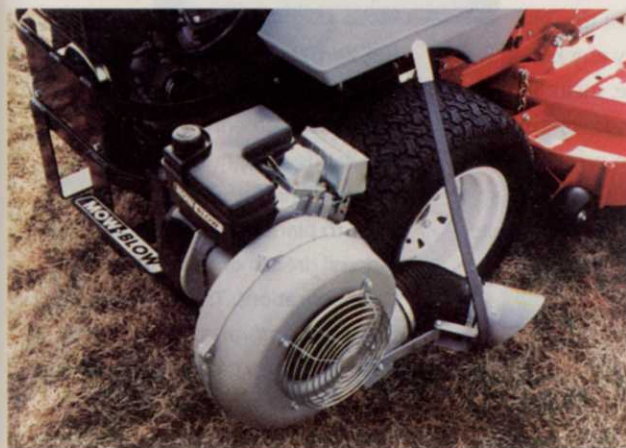
## Weather-matic breaks new ground

The Weather-matic SL Controller is designed to provide complete water management control for commercial and institutional properties. The SL Controller operates as an independent field controller or as a link through a PC, utilizing user-friendly Wetware for Windows software, and offers 12- to 42-station models.

Additional features include: selectable four-program master control or independent station programming; four start times per program; selectable stacking or concurrent operation for each program; pump start or master valve assignable by station; daily 'no water' window; self diagnostics; real time clock to keep date and time during power loss and separate transformers for valve output and controller operation.

For more information contact Weather-matic call 888/4THE-PRO, or [www.weathermatic.com](http://www.weathermatic.com), or

Circle No. 271



## Mow-Blow saves time and money

Designed by professional lawn care experts, the Mow-Blow instantly disperses clippings, cutting mowing time up to 50 percent with no clumping or trails and virtually eliminating double or cross cutting. The Mow-Blow installs in minutes, is easily adjustable or removable, and eliminates bagging, vacuuming or sweeping clippings. Good for long or damp grass conditions, Mow-Blow is ideal for parks departments, landscapers, lawn care professionals, golf and country clubs and grounds maintenance companies. For more information contact Mow-Blow Company, 1020 Wilson N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49544, call 616/453-2191, fax 616/453-3787, or

Circle No. 270

## Hand-held tool measures water flow

The Universal from MicroWeir, Portland, OR, is the first and only hand tool that determines water use before and after installation of plumbing products. At nine inches high, the universal has both 3 to 22 liters-per-minute and 0.35 to 6 gallons-per-minute easy-to-read scales.

Manufactured of clear polycarbonate, the Universal has no mechanical or moving parts to break down, requires no calibration and is light and easily handled.

Each serial-numbered Universal is guaranteed accurate to  $\pm 5$  percent and has been used by a wide variety of companies and government departments requiring water flow information. For more information contact Lee Johnson at MicroWeir Co., at 503/827-8501, fax 503/827-8505, email: [ljmweir@hotmail.com](mailto:ljmweir@hotmail.com), or

Circle No. 272



## Get the balance right

When it comes to resharpener rotary blades, balance is very important. An unbalanced rotary blade sets up an unsafe vibration, increases operator fatigue and places excessive loading on mower components. The new Rota Rite 1000 sharpener from Bernhard and Co. is a unique, high speed, semiautomatic rotary blade grinder that takes the guesswork out of blade sharpening.

The blade is mounted onto a sliding carriage which is moved smoothly to produce accurate grinding, producing a sharp and correctly balanced blade every time. The unit is totally enclosed in a cabinet with an built-in vacuum. For more information contact Bernhard and Co., at 800/510-9632, [www.bernhard.co.uk](http://www.bernhard.co.uk), or

Circle No. 273

## BioSafe broad spectrum algaecide/fungicide

ZeroTol from BioSafe Systems is a recently EPA-registered chemical for the broad-spectrum treatment and control of algae, fungi and bacteria on ornamentals and turf. The product uses an

oxidation reaction to quickly and effectively kill algae, fungi and bacteria on contact, including spores.

With a zero hour



REI, ZeroTol does not use or produce toxic residues and is labeled for use in commercial greenhouses, garden centers, landscapes, nurseries, interiorscapes and turf. ZeroTol can be applied to plant material as a pre-plant dip, soil drench or foliar spray, including turf applications. The product is labeled for algae, *Anthracoze*, black spot, *Botrytis*, brown patch, copper spot, dollar spot, downy mildew, fairy ring, *Fusarium* blight, leaf spot, pink snow mold, *Pseudomonas*, *Pythium*, *Phytophthora*, powdery mildew, *Rhizoctonia*, rust, scab, summer patch, scum, stripe smut, slime molds, *Thielaviopsis*, wilt and blights and their spores.

For more information contact BioSafe Systems, 80 Commerce St., Glastonbury, CT 06033, at 888/273-3088, fax 860/657-3388, email: [biosafe@snet.net](mailto:biosafe@snet.net), [www.biosafesystems.com](http://www.biosafesystems.com), or

Circle No. 275

## Colored topping for those dull surfaces

Micro-Top by Bomanite is a cost-effective, colored topping system that can be applied to existing walkways, driveways, entries, patios, pool decks and interior flooring. Unlimited color and design options can be installed, without prior abrasive blasting, in new or existing sites, utilizing a troweled-on topping that bonds to virtually any horizontal or vertical substrate, including concrete, wood, metal, plastic or asphalt. The micro-thin application presents a



savings in comparison to high dosage cement coloring and makes graphic designs less time consuming. For more information contact Bomanite Corporation at 209/673-2411, fax 209/673-8246, email: [bomanite@bomanite.com](mailto:bomanite@bomanite.com), [www.bomanite.com](http://www.bomanite.com), or

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Circle 128



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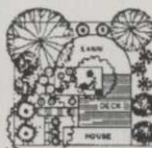
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URL :<http://www.cagwin.com>

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This is a full time position with benefits including \$30K salary, 401(k), health insurance, bonus opportunities, and GCSAA membership.

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**Fax: 440-826-2865,**

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# Grab Bag

## Lawn Institute merges with Turf Resource Center

With the merger of the Lawn Institute into the Turf Resource Center (TRC) of Turfgrass Producers International (TPI), consumer education is slated to expand. The resources, materials and other assets of the Lawn Institute will be transferred to the TRC's on-going public relations and education program.

"Since we suspended operations a year ago," said Lawn Institute President Scott Patterson, "we have explored a number of ways we could continue the consumer education efforts of the Institute, without the day-to-day management and operational requirements."

David Doguet, TPI's immediate past president and a driving force behind creation of the TRC, said, "Five years ago, when TPI started to consider a public education program, we recognized that some would think we were only concerned with promoting turfgrass sod. However, our intention and results prove that we really want to promote the environmental benefits of turfgrass, regardless of how it is established. Integrating the Lawn Institute's reputation, materials and funds with the TRC will allow this program to do even more, and more effectively."

## Turn Merchants Inc. celebrates first 15 years

Over 300 customers, golf course superintendents, and distributors from across the United States helped Turf Merchants Inc. celebrate its 15th anniversary on June 19 at Willamette Valley Vineyards. There were also guests from China, Japan, and New Zealand. Dignitaries at the Customer Appreciation Dinner included State Senator Mae Yin and State Representative Carolyn Oakley. Dr. Joe Vargas, a turf specialist from Michigan State University was guest speaker. Steve Tubbs, president and owner of TMI, gave highlights of the company's growth from a small seed wholesaler to the largest independently owned Oregon seed company in 1998 with sales of over \$40 million when combined with its two affiliates in Missouri and Texas.



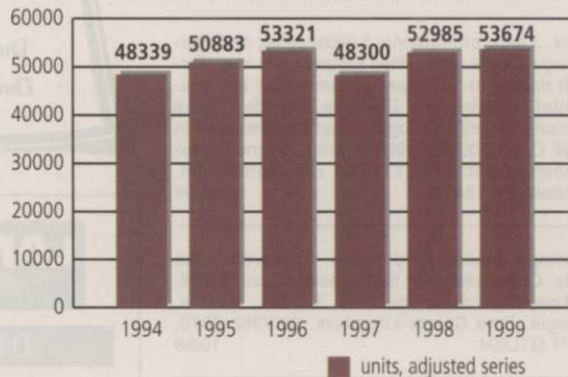
## Commercial mowers sold well in '98

Sales of commercial rotary mowers—both riding and intermediate-size walk behinds—were hot in 1998. The market for rotary riders should stay robust through 1999.

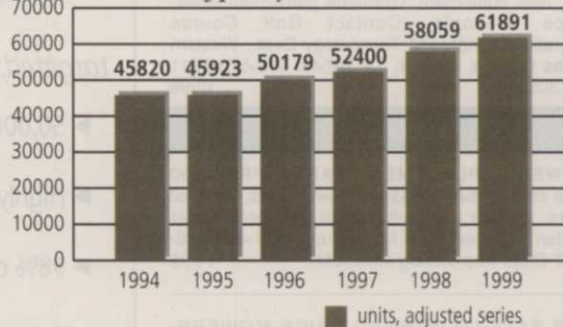
The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, Inc., Alexandria, VA, recently reported that rotary riders had "a substantial increase" of 10.8 percent, pushing shipments to 61,891 units for the model year running from September through August. The number of intermediate walkers rose by 9.7 percent to 52,985 units, rebounding from a disappointing 1997 when sales dropped by 10 percent.

The OPEI projected a strong market for commercial riders again in 1999, a 6.6 percent rise over 1998, or about 61,891 units. Sales of intermediate-size walk mowers shouldn't be as robust with a gain of 1.3 percent estimated.

## WALK BEHIND ROTARY TURF MOWERS Intermediate size commercial units



## RIDING ROTARY TURF MOWERS All types of commercial units



Grab Bag features brief observations and prognostications throughout the green industry. If you have an unusual photo or comment you'd like to share with us, please send it in...

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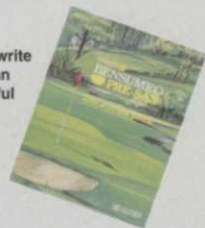


Stuart Cagle,  
C.G.C.S.  
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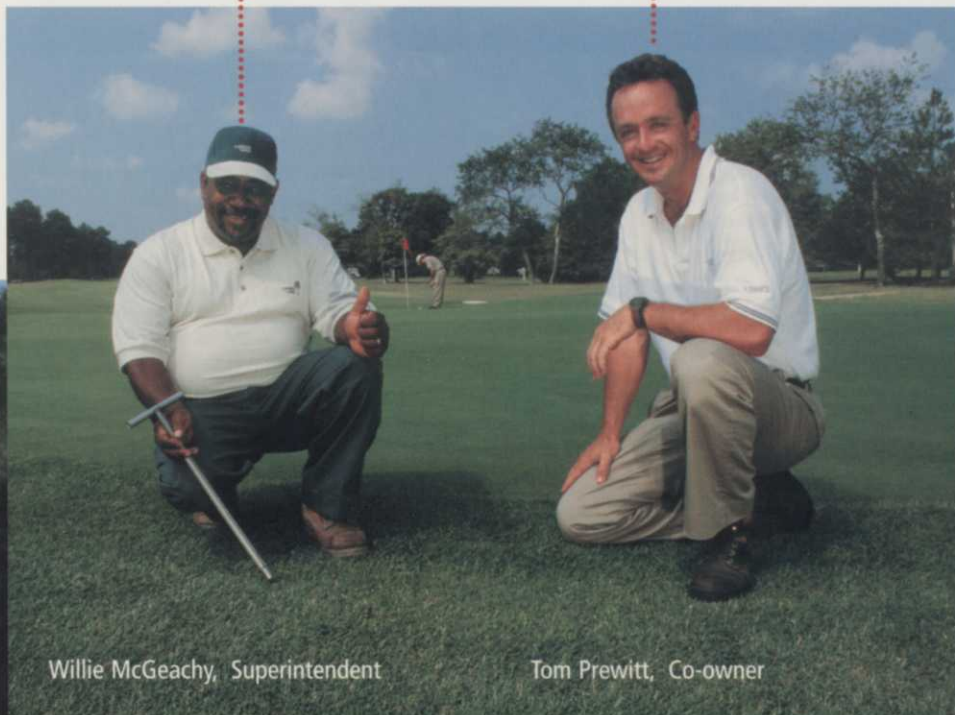
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Willie McGeachy, Superintendent

Tom Prewitt, Co-owner

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