

PLCAA's Arlington project held special meaning for working LCOs

WASHINGTON D.C.— Public service. That's what about 70 landscape and lawn care professionals did here on the Monday morning of July 20. The lawn pros will remember this particular Renewal & Remembrance project—PLCAA's third—at Arlington National Cemetery for some time.

On the sultry morning that the landscape pros ap-

hundreds—and then thousands—of tourists passed by the laboring LCOs with both curious looks and smiles. Many of these visitors made their way up the winding shaded roads toward the grave site of former president John F. Kennedy. They were making the trek because of JFK Jr.'s tragic disappearance off Martha's Vineyard just three days previously.

These events gave a special poignancy to a morning that, in many respects, showed the green industry in its finest colors.

Just after 9 a.m., before the day's heat sapped workers' energy, the landscape pros rededicated a garden site in the cemetery with comments by both the Honorable Togo D. West, Jr., Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and a short but moving address by 16-year-old Jackie Hague, the daughter of Douglas and Pam Hague, Lawn Classics Inc., Findlay, OH.

The garden area, ablaze with bright red "Veterans Honor Roses" from Jackson & Perkins, was designed and landscaped by Environmental Care Inc. and U.S. Lawns, Calabasas, CA. Donations of products and services were made by: Village Turf Inc., Mount Vernon, VA; Chantilly Turf Farms Inc., Chantilly, VA; Shemin Nurseries,

plied lime and fertilizer, felled a big tree and laid sod at Arlington, a Navy honor guard solemnly escorted the horse-drawn wagon that transported the flag-covered casket of former astronaut Pete Conrad to its final resting place. The cemetery fell silent and LCOs looked skyward as Navy pilots streaked low over Arlington, one peeling his aircraft away from the formation to signify the loss of a fallen comrade.

Elsewhere in Arlington,



Dave Armitage, Dallas, was one of six Home Team Lawn Care pros working through the heat and humidity at Arlington.



Jackie Hague, 16, made a short but moving dedication prior to the start of the project. Seated behind her are PLCAA President Bob Ottley, left, and the Honorable Togo D. West, Jr., Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Burtonsville, MD; Pine Hall Brick Co. Inc., Winston-Salem, NC; and Georgia Marble Co., Kennesaw, GA.

The PLCAA pros, using motorized spreaders and tractors with pull-behind spreaders, hustled to complete their assigned tasks so that they wouldn't detract from the solemn events which unfolded around them.

Co-sponsors for this project included: FMC, Novartis, American Cyanamid, Bayer Corp., Dow AgroSciences and AgrEvo. Contributors: Lesco, The Andersons, Jacklin Seed, Riverdale Chemical and Zeneca.

The only hitch of the morning—a well-deserved but very late-arriving lunch.

—Ron Hall

LCOs urge Congress to guide U.S. EPA

WASHINGTON, DC — Don't expect anything earth shaking from the 106th Congress. In fact, don't expect much at all until after the 2000 general elections, predicted Charles Cook, a popular political pundit here and the dinner speaker at PLCAA's Day on the Hill in July.

A do-little Congress is not good news for the pesticide-using segments of the green industry. Indeed, most industries that relay upon pesticides, including agriculture, are urging Congress to pass legislation that would, in effect, put a leash on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's enforcement of the 1996 Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). They want

legislation that "directs" how the U.S. EPA enforces the FQPA.

To date, the EPA's interpretations of FQPA indicate that it favors eliminating classes of chemical products (organophosphates are high on the list) to reduce the public's cumulative exposure. But, the Agency is not basing these interpretations on sound science, many in the green industry contend.

Getting this message to individual legislators was the top issue of the 70 or so professionals attending this year's Day on the Hill.

Allen James, executive director of Responsible Industry for Sound Science (RISE), briefed industry members on

H.R. 1592, the House's version of The Regulatory Fairness & Openness Act of 1999. By month's end it had attracted about 170 cosponsors. On July 29 Senators Chuck Hagel (R-NE) and Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) introduced a companion bill in the U.S. Senate.

The legislation would:

▶ Prevent unnecessary loss of pesticides.

▶ Provide for a smooth transition to accommodate evolving changes in science policy and allow for the development of newly needed data.

▶ And, most important, require the EPA to regulate pesticides based on reliable data and sound science.

"We're not asking Congress to change the law," James told the lawn pros. "We're asking Congress to enter a set of amendments . . . to tell the EPA how to implement the law."

How likely is it that Congress will pass the legislation that RISE and its members are seeking?

There is strong support for it Capitol Hill where much of July was spent squabbling on how large (or small) of a tax break legislators will give taxpayers.

"Don't count on a heck of lot happening with this Congress," Cook told the lawn pros several hours after James briefed them, and the evening before they hustled to Capitol Hill to petition their legislators.

Cook pointed out that the Republicans have a scant majority in the Senate and are hugging the middle of the road with elections approaching.

"This could be one of the least productive Congresses in modern history," he added.

The green industry, along with agriculture, is working the Hill to make sure that, at least, it passes legislation clarifying the U.S. EPA's interpretation of the FQPA.

—Ron Hall

U.S. EPA meets deadline; bans uses of products

WASHINGTON, DC —

The U.S. EPA on Aug. 3 banned most uses for two organophosphate pesticides used almost exclusively in agriculture.

"This was the first big deadline the EPA had to meet with the FQPA," Elizabeth Lawder of Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE), told *Landscape Management*. Under the 1996 law, the agency faced a deadline to finish reviewing the first third of hundreds of chemicals by early August.

Starting next year, the pesticide methyl parathion may not be used on a variety of crops from apples to turnips. Uses on some other crops will continue. Also banned was azinphos methyl, again mostly used in agriculture (but also with some uses for nursery crops and mosquito control).

While pesticide-using industries complain that the agency isn't using sound science in its FQPA decisions, the National Resources Defense Fund threatened a lawsuit against the EPA because it doesn't think the U.S. EPA is moving fast enough to remove chemical pesticides from the marketplace.

Internet sites match contractors with clients

Two new Internet services might make it easier for landscape managers to connect with potential clients. The sites, www.imandi.com and www.improvenet.com allow consumers to seek bids for landscape design, build, installation and lawn care/maintenance services.

The cofounder of Imandi, Raghav Kher, says the idea stemmed from his own difficulties in finding an appropriate landscape contractor. When he retired from Microsoft, his wife gave him a long to-do list. Frustrated with finding a landscaping or

lawn care company for his property, he established imandi.com so other homeowners would have an easier time finding such companies.

"It was such an inefficient process," says Kher. "I wasted so much time tracking down lawn care companies, leaving messages and playing phone tag. Then, it occurred to me—I could change this process myself."

Improvenet.com will research your company's legal and financial status, which it rates for online users. It also allows you displays photographs of finished projects.



After a consumer completes the online forms at either site specifying his or her needs, the sites list several local firms in their database.

It's up to the contractors to contact consumers directly with competitive bids (Imandi) or appointments (ImproveNet). — Jim Guyette



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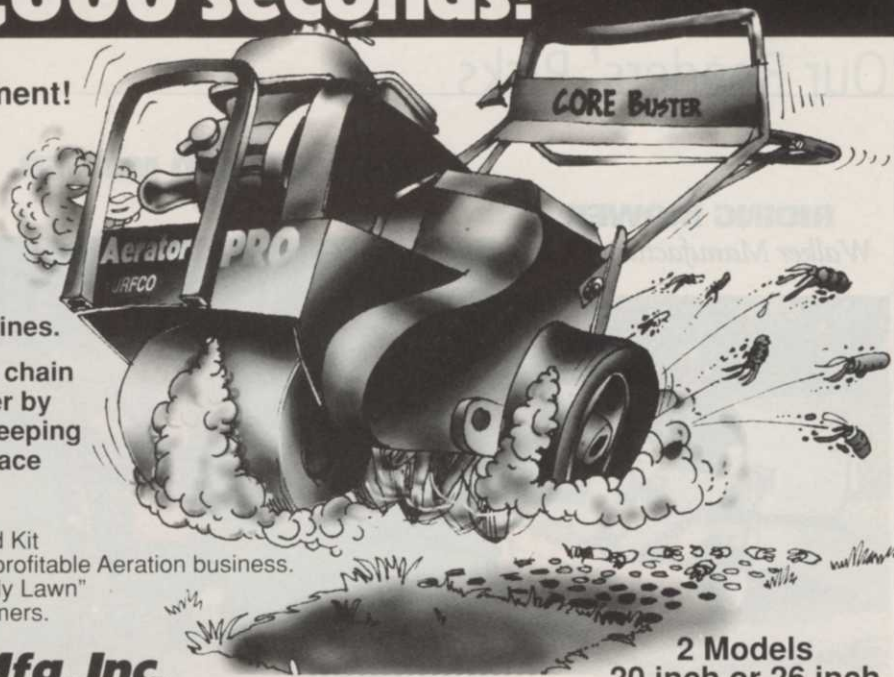
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