



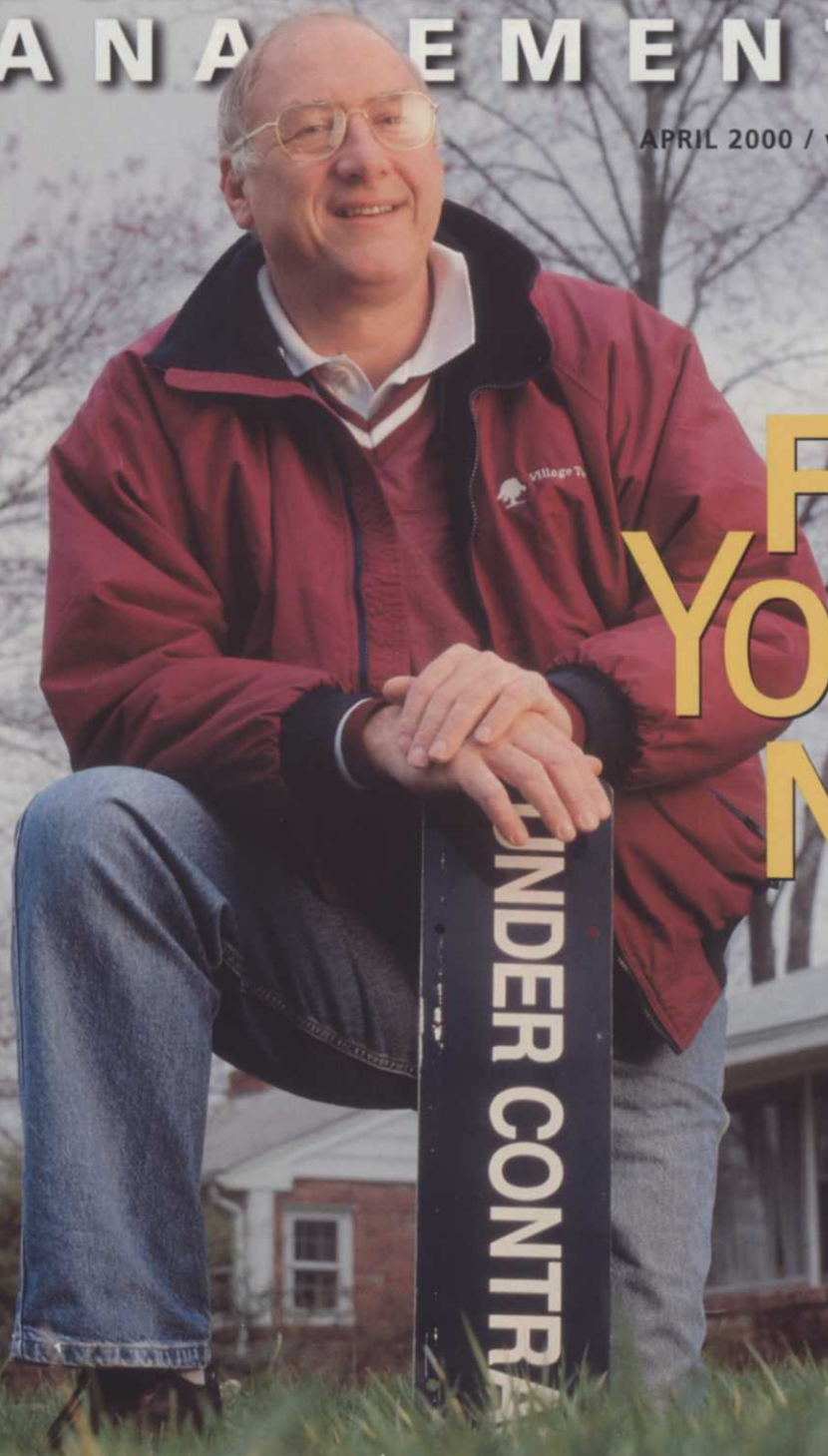
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COVER PHOTO: LOU KOBUS JR. OF VILLAGE TURF, MOUNT VERNON, VA. THE PHOTO WAS TAKEN BY SCOTT ROBINSON.

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BY SUE GIBSON / EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Risky business

It's 3 a.m. and you're tossing in bed, awake and worrying. In the dark, you stew about your cash flow, whether your assistant Dean is going out on his own (he does) and how to get that slow-paying condo to pay on time (it doesn't). Your mind races but at this hour of the morning there are no answers, only uncertainties. Welcome to what I call the "midnight watch" of entrepreneurship.

I stayed awake too, when I ran my small company for 11 years, and I remember how scary it felt. It is scary because owning a business means shouldering the risk and most of us don't have a bailout.

As an action-minded entrepreneur, you might take the next step: "I'll find a new angle, a new customer, a new 'twist' that will make these problems insignificant. I'll just sell more!" It may not work out that way but it seems comforting at the time.

As growth is the basis of business, I can't say this thinking is wrong, just a path you should consider carefully. Most business experts preach that you tend the home fires first, before you wander far afield. Make it work right, then grow it, they say.

That's good advice. You can't have a fundamentally weak business, an unprofitable one or a dysfunctional one and expect to successfully handle new projects, customers or services. It's too risky and it won't work for long. You'll do yourself more good if you concentrate on a few major goals:

- ▶ Strengthen your operations to make them effective
- ▶ Reevaluate your pricing and production to make them profitable
- ▶ Invest in your employees to make your services consistently good

▶ Remember your strengths and focus your business on them

Of course, these sound easy but they take constant work, as most good things do. There's nothing easy about making a business successful — it's a constant focus for every business, because business involves risk, all the time.

Carve yourself a new niche

But let's say you think you're ready to try that new angle, seek out new customers or add a new service twist. Our cover story (page 30) has several ideas that might work for you or might be the basis for new twists of your own.

Some of your fellow contractors have gotten great reception from the marketplace, and they're making these niches profitable, with few competitors. Check them out!

Sound good? I recommend before you take the plunge, analyze your options. Last year's March issue included a story ("Time to Add a New Service?" page 70) with guidelines for analyzing a new service from a financial perspective. If you don't have this story, give us a call at 800/225-4569 x2729 and we'll get you one. You can work through the analysis and then get down to your own 'risky business.' — SG

"Business experts say to tend the home fires first, before you wander far afield. That's good advice." —SG



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5

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events

WHAT, WHEN & WHERE

May 2000

1-3 Southeastern Turfgrass Conference / Tifton, GA; 912/386-3416

3 The Hazard Trees: How to Identify, Evaluate and Manage Defective Trees Seminar / Nebraska City, NE; Sponsored by The National Arbor Day Foundation; 402/474-5655

4-5 Wood Waste Utilization National Conference / Nebraska City, NE; Sponsored by The National Arbor Day Foundation; 402/474-5655

June 2000

16 Turf 2000 / Phoenix, AZ; Sponsored by Pennington Seed and Seeds West; 520/783-2050

21 UMass Turf Research Field Day / South Deerfield, MA; 413/545-3006

July 2000

12 Maryland Turfgrass Research Field Day & Open House / Paint Branch Turfgrass Research Facility; John M. Krouse; 301/403-4234.

13-15 International Irrigation Expo / Leon Guanajuato, Mexico; (461) 60427,25977,25985

13-16 ANLA Convention and Executive Learning Retreat / Vancouver, BC; 202/789-2900

13-16 ALCA Summer Leadership Meeting / San Diego, CA; 800/395-2522

15-18 Texas Turfgrass Association Conference / Galveston, TX; 409/690-2201

19-21 Turfgrass Producers International Summer Conference and Field Days / Spokane, WA; 800/405-TURF

22-24 International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment Expo / Louisville, KY; 800/558-8767

24-25 PLCAA Legislative Day On The Hill / Washington, D.C.; 800/458-3466

August 2000

14-18 Florida Turfgrass Association Annual Conference and Show / Gainesville, FL; 800/882-6721

15 Cornell Field Day / Ithaca, NY; 607/255-1792

September 2000

7-8 Southwest Horticultural Trade Show / Phoenix, AZ; Sponsored by the Arizona Nursery Association; 480/966-1610

25-27 Trees, People and the Law Conference / Nebraska City, NE; Sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation; 402/474-5655

OCTOBER 2000

4-5 Turfgrass Landscape and Equipment Expo / Costa Mesa, CA; 818/764-5016

28-30 ASLA Annual Meeting and Expo / St. Louis, MO; 202/898-2444

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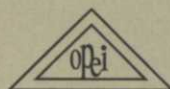
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Who could blame you for going nuts in the spring? Everything happens at once and you have to be everywhere at the same time. This is one of the prices that you pay as a landscape contractor. You sacrifice time now and, as the season slows and things become less hectic, you tally your sales and give yourself a score.

But there's more to life than signing up and servicing another account, even now when there's no such thing as time. There's something called *family*.

That's one of the things that I like about Brent Flory, president of Freedom Lawns, Delphi, IN. He appreciates *family*.

When I started to write this column, I was going to tell you about how his landscape company (86% maintenance/14% construction) got off to such a great start with a new client. How he massed his seven fulltime employees into a team and swept over the 17 acres of the international headquarters of the Great Lakes Chemical Company in West Lafayette, IN.

As things worked out, I visited Flory's firm the first day that his crew — equipped with hand pruners, power edgers, Scag walk-behind mowers and a powerful 455 Toro 4wd — tackled the new account.

Brent had established two goals:

- ▶ to make a dynamite first impression with the new client.
- ▶ to set a standard of quality to meet each time his crews visit the site.

A year later, he still treats the headquarter's property like it was his own and this past winter Freedom Lawns earned even more work at the site.

"I'd love to have a few more accounts just like this one," he says unabashedly.



Brent Flory, right, president of Freedom Lawns, can hardly fit another hour into another busy spring season.

Flory approaches the marketplace with focused intensity and, early this spring, brought in business consultant Frank Ross to help him grow his company beyond its 1999 sales of \$590,000.

Sure, when Brent and I get together, we talk about his plans for expanding Freedom Lawns, but what he really likes to talk about is his family. He credits his wife, Marilyn, who helps out in the business, and he's obviously proud of his two daughters, one a collegiate runner, and the sons who are also fine young men and athletes.

In fact, when he talks about the industry or about his employees, you sense that he views them in much the same light — like family.

.....
Contact Ron at 440/891-2636
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There's more to life than signing up another account — there's family. —RH



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"Unless you spend time creating more efficient systems, you won't get more time for necessary things." DH



Is this the best way to do it?

In our business, we always ask, "Is this the best way to do it?"

As a young man in Iowa working for my father's nursery business I asked myself that question many times. When I went out on my own, I was able to indulge my passion for constant improvement. I'd like to share with you our way of doing things better in three important areas:

- ▶ time management
- ▶ staging
- ▶ per-person productivity.

Time management

Dwight Hughes Nursery in Cedar Rapids, IA, specializes in 2-in. shade trees. We grow most of our own material, and the same people who do the growing landscape with those plants.

Time management is why we're successful at it.

It's easy to fall into the trap of believing that you don't have time to make changes in your business. But unless you spend time creating more efficient systems, you'll never free up more time to do what's necessary.

Our firm has succeeded in expanding our business without adding to our four employees. Also, we've attracted some positive notice in the industry by drawing repeated press notices for our contributions in materials handling and robotics.

One of our time management strategies focuses on materials handling systems. To me, materials handling means everything from having the right vendors, to doing good maintenance on your equipment, to hiring and keeping people who will maintain quality equipment, to modifying, designing and redesigning the machines we use.

It's preferable to have a system handle materials and not a person. For fun, count how many wheels per person you have. Then compare your answer with our current count of 140 inflatable tires, or 35 wheels per person!

Tools for productivity

We've been working for over a decade on the Tree Boss, a robotic, hydraulic, one-person tree handling system. It allows one person to pick up, tilt and move a tree either onto or off of a trailer. One person can unload 80 6-ft. evergreens from a supplier's trailer in an hour, leaving the trees positioned at the planting site or holding area. Contrast that with the time it takes to manually unload, carry and position trees.

The first version of the Tree Boss enabled us to double our nursery inventory and sales volume without adding people. The Tree Boss never calls in sick and doesn't participate in our pension-profit sharing plan. And one of them pays for itself in half a season.

Staging takes smarts

In most Green Industry companies, staging eats up a lot of time. I know many companies that need more than an hour to stage their work in the morning. Our average time to get ready to roll is 12 minutes.

A big part of that is materials handling. With the Tree Boss, we can get our B&B shade trees loaded the night before, or we can do it early in the morning. Also, our shade house, poly house and open container holding area are close to each other and to our main building. We drive a truck up a main aisle and load it easily from both sides.

Some of our ideas are simple. For example, we

continued on page 20

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. . . A n d T h e C h e m i s t r y I s O n

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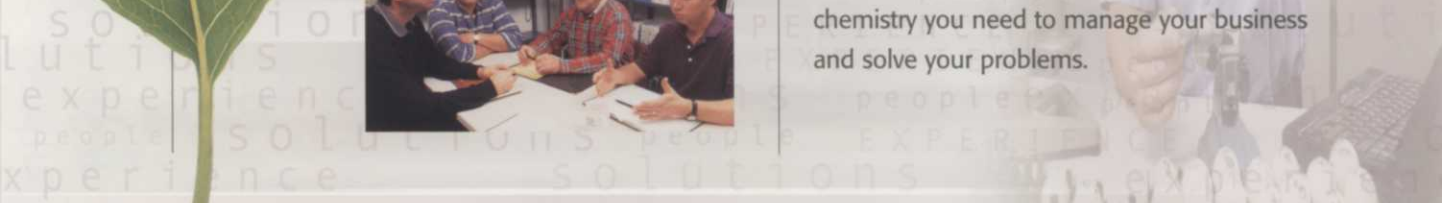
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Sales Director Rich Burns and Marketing Director Dan Carrothers . . . together they've helped focus the efforts of Bayer Corporation Garden & Professional Care (GPC) on ensuring that our field force and our market managers have the industry insight, the product knowledge and the research support they need to respond quickly to the demands of the marketplace. And with the establishment of the Bayer Corporation GPC business unit in 1996, we made available to our managers, to our field representatives and to you – our customers – the worldwide resources of Bayer AG. As a result of this leadership and dedication to the turf and ornamental industry, we've been able to offer you more than just innovative products – we offer solutions.



Plus Experience . . .

And the reason we can bring you these solutions is simple. We recruit the best people from all levels of the business, so our field force has experience and technical knowledge unmatched among basic manufacturers. Our 30-plus field representatives and managers have an average of 13½ years experience providing the products and services that help build relationships and grow businesses. Many of our sales and development representatives have advanced technical degrees, so you know their recommendations are based on scientific data, not marketing trends. Research Product Manager Doug Spilker, Ph.D., has several years of research-related experience in the green industry. Turf and Ornamental Market Manager Neil Cleveland has more than a decade of experience in all levels of the business before joining Bayer Corporation GPC as a field sales representative. They know you need more than just effective products to make your business successful. With the resources of Bayer Corporation GPC behind them, they can provide you with the support programs, the sales and application training, the product information and the chemistry you need to manage your business and solve your problems.



ly As Good As The People.



Plus Chemistry . . .

But it's not just where our people come from that make the difference – it's what they do for you. We put people like Julie Spagnoli, Manager of Federal Regulatory Affairs, in Washington, D.C., to represent our interests and the interests of our customers to the EPA, as well as to key industry associations. Monty Eberhardt, Ph.D., Manager of Product Safety, works with agencies and associations on key issues such as the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). Together, they and their staffs provide you with more than products . . . they help give your industry a voice.

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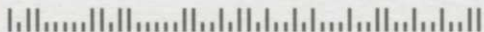


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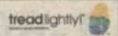
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my way

continued from page 16

store fertilizer tablets in a dog food dispenser mounted on the wall. It takes a person seven seconds to fill a container with tablets from that dispenser compared to 47 seconds it took by hand. Also, we keep tools on wall racks in designated spots. Our shop has an ironclad rule: When you use a tool, you clean it and put it back where it belongs. We also use double-decker storage — equipment with wheels stays on the first floor and everything else is elevated.

Per-person productivity

America is obsessed with the idea that bigger is better, but I don't have to tell this readership that volume and profit are two

different animals. So, we measure the health of our business in dollar volume per person. Each person represents a volume of \$125,000 to \$150,000 in landscape business, including materials. I don't see many businesses that generate more than \$100,000 of production per person per year.

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If you're always asking the question, "Can we do this better," the answers will come. I thought of our sharp-pivoting 'airplane trailers' while sitting on a plane at O'Hare Airport, watching a tractor make tight turns while towing a jetliner.

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— Dwight Hughes is president of Dwight Hughes Nursery in Cedar Rapids, IA. He is recognized throughout the industry for innovation. Dwight is a board member of the American Nursery and Landscape Association's Horticultural Research Institute, and has attracted national attention for his work in developing robotic equipment for use in the Green Industry. His book and videotape, "Systems for Success," detail his thinking and methods. For more information, call 319-396-7038.

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industry almanac

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Alamo Group buys Schwarze Industries

HUNTSVILLE, AL — Alamo Group Inc. recently acquired Schwarze Industries, purchasing 100% of Schwarze's issued and outstanding shares of stock.

Schwarze is one of the United States' top four manufacturers of power sweeping equipment. Alamo is a leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of heavy duty, tractor-mounted mowing and vegetation maintenance equipment in the United States and Europe.

R.A.R. Landscape buys Arbortech

BALTIMORE, MD — R.A.R. Landscaping Co., a full-service landscape firm specializing in commercial maintenance, acquired Arbortech Tree Experts, Inc., also of Baltimore. Arbortech specializes in tree and stump removal, pruning, fertilizing and pest control. Arbortech will become a division of R.A.R., says Richard Rothstein, R.A.R. president. Steve Neas, who founded Arbortech in 1989, became a part of the R.A.R. team.

CLIPPINGS

Chemical giant BASF plans to buy Cyanamid for \$3.8 billion

LUDWIGSHAFEN, GERMANY -

German chemical giant BASF is set to buy the Cyanamid herbicide division of drug company American Home Products (AHP) Corp. for \$3.8 billion.

The purchase would double BASF's business in agricultural chemicals while allowing AHP to focus on its drug and health care products businesses.

"The bulk of our company's business has been pharmaceuticals, so we're largely a drug company," said Lowell Weiner, assistant vice president of public relations for AHP. "Over the years, we've been concentrating more and more on pharmaceuticals, divesting our medical device companies, American Home Foods and now agriculture."

According to Weiner, AHP now spends up to \$2 billion annually on drug research and development.

BASF said that there are three advantages to the purchase of Cyanamid, which makes herbicides, fungicides and pesticides:

- ▶ greatly expands the company's product range
- ▶ should allow them to save \$250 million a year by wiping out overlapping operations
- ▶ will help them penetrate growing markets in North and

South America.

Under the deal, BASF would assume an undisclosed amount of debt from AHP's Cyanamid unit related to operations in Asia.

In a separate transaction, AHP is selling certain products to an unrelated party for \$28 million.

Some analysts questioned the high price paid for Cyanamid, whose sales dropped 24% to \$1.7 billion

last year, and worried about the assumption of debt. News of the acquisition drove BASF shares down 2.94% in early Frankfurt trading.

Other analysts, however, said the deal is positive because it bolsters BASF's position as one of the world's top agrochemical producers.

If the deal is cleared by competition authorities, it would take effect July 1.

Husqvarna "tops out" new North American headquarters

CHARLOTTE, NC - Husqvarna "topped out" its new North American headquarters recently with a grand ceremony that included company president Dave Zeffoss and Husqvarna spokesperson, race team owner and three-



Husqvarna president Dave Zeffoss (left) and three-time Super Bowl champion Joe Gibbs laugh it up at the topping off ceremony.

time Super Bowl champion Joe Gibbs. With the wave of a green flag and a signal from Gibbs to "start your engines," a crane hoisted the final steel beam of the new office building adjacent to the company's new warehouse on Statesville Road.

Husqvarna will move into its new North American headquarters in July 2000.

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Circle No. 110 on Reader Inquiry Card

People & companies

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) honored OPEI president Dennis Dix with its Glenn Alexander Award. The award recognized his contributions to the industry during his 27 years as OPEI's CEO.

The Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, OH, promoted Ken Celmer to senior vice president and general manager of the company's residential/commercial service line, Howard Bowles to senior vice president and general manager of the Davey Tree Surgery Co., Gordon Ober to vice president of personnel recruiting and training for all U.S. field operations, Wayne Parker to vice president and general manager

of U.S. eastern utility services, Rick Ramsey to vice president and general manager of Canadian operations, George Gaumer to vice president of the newly-created commercial grounds maintenance division, Mark Vaughn to operations manager for the northern operating group of utility services and Dan Joy to operations manager for the commercial grounds maintenance division.



Van Waters & Rogers, Austin, TX, named John Bolanos vice president of Professional Products and Services.

Tom Riccardi purchased **Visual Impact Imaging**, which is moving to new headquarters in Akron, OH. Previously, he managed the grounds operation at Goodyear Tire & Rubber and has served as president of the Professional Grounds Management Society.



Ferris Industries named James Wier as president and CEO. Also, the company is expanding its factory in Munnsville, NY, from 50,000 sq. ft. to 60,000 sq. ft..

Environmental Industries, Calabasas, CA, promoted Richard Sperber to chief operating officer.

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Transgenic turf is a great opportunity for the Green Industry

ST. LOUIS – Scientists at the Monsanto Chesterfield, MO, research facility said that bioengineered turfgrass is proven technically and it will mean big changes for the Green Industry.

“The technology is very powerful and we will need to implement excellent stewardship to ensure the Green Industry gets the maximum benefit,” said Don Suttner, Technical Manager for Industrial Turf and Ornamental at Monsanto, concerning the eventual commercial production of genetically modified turfgrasses. Speaking to a group of about 150 touring sports field managers in mid January, Suttner said that researchers at Rutgers University are helping look into stewardship issues involving the use of transgenic turfgrass.

Technological advances

Within the past decade, scientists have been able to insert DNA into the genome of a wide variety of plants to introduce beneficial traits that these plants did not already possess. This has led to the planting of millions of acres of crops in the United States grown from bioengineered seeds. Much of this acreage has been planted with seeds containing a gene that makes the plants resistant to Roundup, a herbicide produced by Monsanto.

Testing the commercial waters

Monsanto, in collaboration with turfgrass germ plasma providers, is pursuing development of a number of transgenic turf and ornamental species. No bioengineered turfgrasses are commercially available yet.

Some are in carefully monitored field trials, and more will be tested in the coming years. Monsanto and The Scotts Company are intensively researching the potential for bioengineered bentgrass and related grasses, and the two companies are also working on a framework to properly steward these products as they are brought closer to commercialization.

“We don't have a business plan yet for these plants because commercialization is still a few years away,” said Suttner, explaining that Monsanto and Scotts are proceeding carefully in developing the geneti-

cally modified grasses. Scotts and Monsanto have an agreement to jointly develop turf and ornamental products, including bioengineered turfgrasses for the U. S. turfgrass market.

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Circle 111

AgriBioTech wins interim line of credit

HENDERSON, NV - AgriBioTech Inc., which filed for bankruptcy last January, won an interim Bankruptcy Court order authorizing the company to enter into a Chapter 11 debtor-in-possession (DIP) credit facility with its pre-bankruptcy lenders.

AgriBioTech filed for this order because of a cash flow crisis, the need to make payroll and to support its business operations. The company can only borrow up to \$23 million under the credit facility until the facility is finally approved. The hearing for the approval of the facility on a permanent basis was scheduled for March 22, 2000.

To raise additional funds, AgriBioTech is attempting to sell its assets in one or more going-concern sales. The company is in the process of preparing a bid solicitation package that will be given to all eligible, interested parties, but Development Specialists' William Brandt expressed caution about being too optimistic about any sale. "It remains uncertain at best whether the liquidation proceeds will be sufficient to generate any distribution to the company's stockholders," Brandt said.

AgriBioTech's lending group, led by Bank of America

N.A., is anticipated to offer the company the same \$90 million line of credit it had prior to declaring bankruptcy once the DIP credit facility is approved.

The company expects to make term loan borrowings of \$13 million under the DIP fa-

cility.

The DIP credit facility terminates on July 31, 2000. However, the facility may be terminated earlier by the company, the bank group or anyone else specified in the credit facility agreement.

A student speaks up

"I just like to get dirty. I most like the nursery end of it — it's the coolest thing to plant something and watch it grow."

— Frances Covington, a senior with a major in Ornamentals and Landscape Technology, North Carolina State University, on why she is seeking a professional career in the Green Industry. Frances was one of the many college students who converged on Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS, March 9-12 for ALCA's annual Student Career Days.

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Surfin' Turf

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Of course, click4services.com isn't merely a place where Mrs. Finchbeak can tattle on you. It's a way for businesses to attract new clients in their local area via the Internet. Here's how it works: consumers enter their zip code and obtain instant information on click4services.com business mem-

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—By Jason T. Stahl /
Managing Editor

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You're mowing a lawn, planting flowers or installing an irrigation system; doing the same things you do daily, content with providing basic services. But you're not listening. Your long-time lawn care client wonders how he might incorporate his love of golf and model trains into his yard. You shrug your shoulders. A city councilperson is distraught over the lack of snow for the city's annual winter festival. You say, "oh well."

There's nothing wrong with doing the basic services, but sometimes your clients have special needs.

These needs have the potential to complement your other services, make each day you work more interesting and, most important, increase revenues. So listen up and learn.

BY JASON STAHL/MANAGING EDITOR



Let it snow

Jonathan Sweeney, owner of Darien Tree & Lawn Care Co., Darien, CT, was skiing when a great idea came to him. It was as if he had been smashed over the head with an icicle: Wouldn't it be cool to make snow at home?

He went ahead and researched the idea on the Web, trying to discover if there was a market for it. The answer he got came from the real world, not cyberspace. A client asked him if it would be possible to get manmade snow for a holiday party. That was when dollar signs started floating in his head.

But Sweeney's dream wasn't as easy to accomplish as he thought. He rented some equipment and, in his own words, started "screwing around" at his house. He realized right away that snow making wasn't for amateurs.

"It's very technical," Sweeney said. "You have to know a lot about electrical engineering, hydraulics, atmosphere, water temperature and evaporation rates. You don't just hook up the water and make money, which is what we originally thought."

But Sweeney didn't see the complexity and costs of snow making as obstacles; if anything, he viewed them as deterrents to competitors. And he was right.

Three years after adding Snowman Services of Darien to his lawn care business, Sweeney finds himself the sole snow maker in the country. Evidence of that, he claims, are 50,000 hits a day on his website and 300 to 600 phone calls a day to his office. His business has snowballed, but he only works within a 100-mile diameter of his home base. And while the time and money he has invested are significant, he is finally on the verge of making a profit.

"We have the Rolls Royce job. We have a \$200,000 investment in machines, trailers, hoses and pumps," Sweeney said. "Every year, my business has doubled. I'd like to say it will triple or quadruple this year, and if it does I'll recover my investment."

Smaller units, costing around \$30,000 to \$40,000, are perfect for residential work because they are quiet and produce an acceptable amount of snow, he said. But doing a big job may take a week, whereas Sweeney's top-notch equipment can do it in two days.

He originally envisioned that his snow making would be most popular for residential accounts, but the town and commercial market is his cash cow. His largest residential account totaled \$2,500, but his largest commercial account was \$8,000. "Once homeowners find out the water costs, they tend to shy away," he said. "But a lot of towns have winter festivals and carnivals and will



John Sweeney and his snow making machine have been raking in cold hard cash.

do anything to make sure there is snow to go with them."

An avid ski show attendee, Sweeney has realized that it may be profitable to serve small ski markets some day. He is also in the process of creating his own small snow making system to which someone could literally hook up a garden hose. "We think that's where the market will be," Sweeney said.

Weeds aren't easy

Phil Fogarty, owner of Crowley's Vegetation Control, Cleveland says: "Any time you can save people time, they're into it, especially because of the current labor crisis."

And that's exactly what his company does. By controlling weeds in industrial settings, ditches, banks and right-of-way areas, Crowley's reduces the number of hours workers with string trimmers would have to spend along fence lines. The overall scope of the work includes preventive weed control, check ups and spot treatment.

"It's more of a permanent solution to a problem that would otherwise require repeated attention," Fogarty explained.

Crowley's normally subcontracts to do weed control on large accounts such as Sea World of Ohio, and last year managed to do \$250,000 worth of business. It is currently bidding on electrical substations and cell towers, but competition is scarce because of the nature of weed control.

"It's a little technical, requires lots of training and not many people want to take the risk of making a mistake with some of these products that might cause damage," Fogarty said. "With a little marketing, we grow each year," he added. "Vegetation control is a high-need item and when someone calls it's usually an immediate sale."

continued on page 32

continued from page 31

The Bug Man

In some circles, Dan Malone is known as the "Bug Man." That shouldn't come as a surprise since he's the owner of Stomp-Em Pest Control in Sunrise, FL. But there's one particular bug that Malone concentrates on: the royal palm bug.

It seems that more royal palms, revered by Florida residents because of their tall, majestic appearance, are being attacked by this pesky insect. In response, Malone has concentrated his efforts on treating the palms and is marketing his new service to all of his clients.

Apparently, the royal palm bug starts chewing on new palms emerging from the top of the tree. By late spring and early summer, the insects inflict severe damage on the new growth and the leaves become frizzled and deformed. The epidemic has increased each year, which is a good thing for Malone since it is when both commercial and residential customers renew their treat-

ment. He uses Merit around the base of the trees, but doesn't know if it worked until the next year. The royal palm bug has not come back to the trees he has treated so far, he says.

Although the handling of the royal palm bug epidemic only accounts for less than 1% of his business, which grossed \$1.5 million last year, Malone expects that percentage to grow as the the problem does.

House calls

Lou Kobus Jr., owner of Village Turf of Mt. Vernon, VA, unexpectedly stumbled upon a newfound service when real estate agents started ringing his phone off the hook.

"They wanted to know if I could spruce up homes for sale so that they would look nicer and sell quicker," Kobus said.

Thus, Lou's Spruce Up Service was born. Timing, Kobus soon found out, was everything, as it was imperative that the yards be cleaned up only a day or two prior to an open house so that everything would remain fresh and clean. Kobus and his crews pruned the trees, redid beds, cut the lawn and picked up trash. They knew they were on to something when one customer called back with positive results.

"She said that her open house was at 1 p.m. and the house was sold by 2:15 p.m.," Kobus said. "The people who bought the house said they stopped to look at it because the yard was so neat."

While Lou's Spruce Up Service only accounts for 2% to 3% of Village Turf's overall business, Kobus said there are other benefits to exploiting the real estate niche. "The buyer of the house will ask the seller who did their lawn maintenance, so we might get a new customer out of it," he said.

A paint in the grass

Mike Hebrard would never pass himself off as Pablo Picasso or Michelangelo. But he has painted enough nice looking, colorful logos on athletic fields to establish his business, Athletic Field Design of Clackamas, OR, as one of the more respected ones around. It was a natural transi-



Lou Kobus Jr.

To stripe or not to stripe

Many sports fans sit in the stands, gaze at the beautiful striping patterns on the field and say to themselves, "Boy, I'd like to have my lawn look like that."

At least one landscaping company, Terra Firma of Muskego, WI, has started to create striping patterns on almost all of its commercial and residential accounts. Vice president Heather Schuster says that the results so far are positive.

"Our customers think it's fun, it catches their eye and they think they're getting something extra," Schuster said. "Our crews have also gotten into it and they think it's fun, too. It keeps them interested in what they're doing."

Learning the technique wasn't that hard, Schuster said. She and her crew took a trip to the Milwaukee Brewers' stadium to see assistant director of grounds Dave Mellor in action. The trip, she said, took longer than learning Mellor's technique.

"You have to think in terms of the viewing angle — where is the lawn going to be viewed from?" Schuster said. "Then, you make stripes away from you and toward you for color change." Her crews, who were already good at keeping lines straight, caught on in no time.

For Terra Firma, striping doubles the amount of time crews spend working on a lawn. But some new mowers could allow landscapers to cut and stripe at the same time or reduce add-on time to around 15 to 20%.

So far, Schuster said that lawn striping is not customer-driven. Terra Firma does it as an added bonus and doesn't charge extra for it. But with the right marketing, she believes it could be a service that could be done for an additional charge.



POINT OF VIEW

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continued from page 32

tion when a friend asked him to paint a design on his lawn.

Before long, he was being asked to create "welcome home" messages for parents whose sons or daughters were coming home from military duty, "will you marry me?" propositions from lovestruck men and sports team mascots and logos for sports fans.

Hebrard's skills were not always requested for his artistic expression. During one nasty drought in the Northwest, clients asked him to paint their lawns green. He has even painted lawns white to look as though they had snow on them.

So far, Hebrard's lawn painting accounts for around 5% of his business. He charges \$100 for most designs and \$50 for the labor plus materials costs. He does most of the designs by hand, using an airless painter and aerosol cans for highlighting, and sometimes uses stencils. It's something anyone with access to paint can do, Hebrard says.

But don't you have to have some kind of artistic talent to do this stuff?

"If you have a crew of 15 to 20 guys, one of them is bound to be pretty good at doing this," Hebrard said.

Going for the green

"I always felt it was a natural niche for landscape contractors," Dan Sowash says of building putting greens on residential and commercial lots.

At least, it was for him in 1998 when he saw the concept at a home and sent away for more details. For a set-up fee ranging from \$8,000 to \$12,000, United Turf Industries (UTI) allowed him to use its products and provided sales leads and helpful tips.

"I was already tooled up for this type of business," said Sowash, owner of Heritage Landscaping, Warren, OH. "I

had a fleet of four trucks, three of which were dump trucks, compaction equipment and a tractor backhoe. We'd also worked with stone material by putting down walks."

All it came down to was traveling to Tennessee to become certified as an official UTI dealer, and Sowash was in business. In his first year, he built 5,000 sq. ft. of greens, and that figure doubled in his second year. Today, golf green construction accounts for 30% of his landscaping business.

While most of his accounts are residential, Sowash is seeing an emerging commercial market, particularly concerning rehabilitation clinics and handicapped facilities.

At \$12 to \$15 per sq. ft., Sowash admits that the demand isn't so much that it's overwhelming. But he says there are more and more UTI distributors who are making golf green construction their primary business.

"If I could do one of these a week, I'd quit landscaping," Sowash said. "It's a better mark-up product. You're

not planting trees where you have to worry about them for the next 30 to 40 days. With landscaping, all I could do was advertise my service — my trees or shrubs weren't any better than the next guy's. But once you have a niche product, you're a specialist



More and more landscape contractors are making putting greens like the ones above and below their primary business.

and you can push it."

Chug-a-chug-a-choo-choo

Do you think you can grow your clientele base and increase profits by creating miniature train wonderlands? People in garden railroading think so. They cite an increase in *Garden Railways* magazine's circulation from 18,000 to 35,000 in three years and a 6% increase in sales of large-scale equipment as evidence of an emerging trend.

"Large scale, outdoor trains are the biggest segment of our industry right now," said Peter Oelschlaeger, owner of America's Trainyard in Baton Rouge, LA, and installer of garden railroads. "Sales have almost doubled within the last five years. I believe nurseries are going to have to start stocking miniature plants for garden railroad because of demand."

Miniature plants are one of the many specialty items needed to build a garden railroad. Everything has to be in scale with the train itself. "A good size bush is 24 inches tall, because that translates into a 48-foot tall tree."



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Oelschlaeger says the rules are different for building garden railroads, but that's why this add-on service is a good fit for skilled landscapers. Garden railroads can be built to stand alone or as part a garden, and each one presents its own challenges. "If you're building it on its own, you're going to have to provide structure, a building to support it and electronics," Oelschlaeger said. "If you're putting the train in the garden, you have to provide a right of way as you plan the landscape."

While the supplies for garden railroading can be expensive, from \$350 to \$500 for a locomotive and \$65



for a rail car, so is the installation fee: \$5,000 and often double that, depending on the size.

Garden railroad builders often continue to service a client even after the railroad is built. Landscape contractor and garden railroad builder Jack Verducci of San Mateo, CA, said if the client prefers to pay someone to maintain the layout's scenery, the landscaper/garden railroad contractor can reap significant after-sale profits from labor such as weeding and trimming the miniature trees.

Joshua Wright of Garden Craft nursery and garden center in Hanover, MA, advises landscapers new to garden railroad building to interact with the trains before building any layouts for them. "If you're going to get into it, you really need to get into it — don't dabble in it," Wright said. "Buy a starter kit and play with it and see what the train can do first."

Garden railroad displays like this one require a skilled hand with attention to detail.

The bottom line on niche markets

- ▶ Find out what your customers' needs are
- ▶ Investigate your market and competition
- ▶ Investigate products and methods thoroughly
- ▶ Experiment
- ▶ Fit it into your operation by analyzing your needs for:

- staffing
- equipment
- products
- routes
- scheduling
- other investments

- ▶ For franchises, check:

- what training is available
- legal and financial commitments
- marketing/sales support

No light matter

Installing lights is nothing new, but an organized, effective way of doing it is. Christmas Decor and Nite Time Decor have steadily grown into one of the fastest growing franchises in the country. In five years, the company has grown to 250 locations in 46 states, evidence of a growing desire for commercial and residential lighting.

Steve Russell, director of operations for the lawn and tree care division of Eradico Lawn and Landscaping, Detroit, MI, says the growth his company has experienced since buying into Christmas Decor has been huge.

"Our first year, we experienced 150% growth," Russell said. "This year, we're hoping to do 35% to 40% more business than last year. At first, I was skeptical about how many people would want this sort of service, but so far it's been absolutely great."

Russell said the company recovered its \$12,900 franchise fee during the first year of operation. Their success with Christmas Decor has prompted them to buy into Nite Time Decor at a cost of \$15,900.

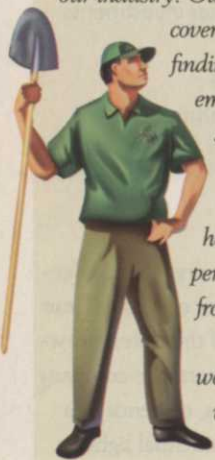
"If we would have tried this by ourselves, we'd probably be out of it by now with a lot of money left on the table," Russell said. "The franchise system provides you with the expertise and know-how and systems you need to succeed."

As with many add-on services, making some extra money is often just one part of the niche equation. "We end up converting a lot of our lighting customers over to our lawn care business," Russell said. **LM**

The supervisors' tale

Editor's note: Whether you like it or not, the labor crunch is here to stay in our industry. Our two previous issues covered many aspects of finding and keeping good employees, and future issues will continue the coverage. This month's story shows how to grow good supervisors and managers from within.

Your experiences are welcome, too. Contact us at 440/891-2729.



EI has a tradition of growing from within. Here, Arman, Johnson and Lopez meet.



These employees were developed into managers from within the company. Your employees may have similar potential

Environmental Industries Inc., Calabasas, CA, is the largest privately owned landscape contracting firm in the United States, with a reputation for developing its own people into supervisors and managers. We asked Bill Arman, vice president for human resources to talk to a few.

Arman: One who comes to mind is Raul Lopez at the Orange County office. I recommend him because he has moved from being an absolute non-English speaking entry-level worker from Mexico to an account manager. He is responsible for over \$1 million worth of revenue and deals directly with the customer, writes budgets, negotiates contracts, handles quality control... the whole management trip. He's a kind of hero here.

LM: Is it okay if we interview him?

Arman: If you can reach him. He's the kind who answers the phone at 6 a.m. before going out to the field.

Raul Lopez' story

LM: You've come a long way with this company, then?

Lopez: Pretty much. I started in November of 1980. I came in as a laborer, pulling weeds. This year I passed the 19-year mark.

LM: We understand that at the time you started, there were some skills you needed to develop.

Lopez (laughs): I didn't even have a driver's license!

LM: And now you are an account manager with over \$1 million in accounts?

Lopez: Correct.

LM: Clearly, something good happened. Did the company help you get this far?

Lopez: Pretty much. They helped get whatever I was lacking, like the driving thing. At that time Rob Johnson, the branch manager in this office, was the senior foreman and saw something in me. He felt he could develop me into something. He took me under his wing and taught me how to drive and do all the things I didn't know how to do.

LM: You went on to become a foreman yourself?

Lopez: Yes, I did. After two years.

LM: You must have gone to some schools.

Lopez: I went to seminars here in the company, but I never took outside courses. The only thing I went to an outside school for was to improve my English.

LM: You did well, because your English is excellent!

Lopez: Thank you.

LM: How did you get to be an account manager? That's a big step.

Lopez: My strength was getting things done on time, so I kept developing that and making money on the jobs in my area, and the company saw me doing that. They figured if I could improve my skills for communicating with clients, they would have somebody who could be an account manager. And they helped me a lot in that, especially Bill (Arman) and Rob.

LM: So the company encouraged you?

Lopez: Right. They gave me what I wanted in terms of what I could do. When I said, "I want to go and try this or that," they never said no.

LM: Would you like to go higher?

Lopez: If there is an opportunity, I don't see why not. If you never try, you never know how high you're going to go.

Rob Johnson's story

(Rob is vice president of operation, Orange County branch of EII)

LM: You spotted and developed Raul from within and now he's an account manager.

Johnson: You bet. At the time I met him, I was an area supervisor and Raul was a laborer who came from Mexico, didn't have a driver's license and didn't speak English that well. But he showed me a little spark, a little initiative, and that he's a smart person.

LM: What specifically did he show you?

Johnson: He was well groomed, not sloppy... he would look me in the eye and we would be able to have a good conversation. The work he did was very good. And he could direct other people. I could see that he had leadership skills.

LM: What did you do to encourage and help him along?

Johnson: Raul was able to grab onto things fairly fast, and because of that I was able to give him more responsibilities. As that progressed, we started planning out different things to train him on. Raul was doing simple gardening activities and I elevated his work to other things such as using chemicals or irrigation repair. We have some generic activities that a crew leader needs to be able to accomplish, so we set up Raul in the training programs for that. He became a full-fledged crew leader from there.

LM: We hear you even helped him get his driver's license.

Johnson: I actually went with him and showed him how to drive. When he got his learner's permit, we went to an area that wasn't highly populated, and he drove around there. When he was comfortable, I went on the freeway with him – and that

continued on page 40

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continued from page 39
was a lot of fun (laughs). Once he had his license, a whole new set of opportunities opened up for him, as well as for me. He could now be a crew leader. It became clear that he had the skills to direct more than one crew. We gave him another person with another truck and built from there — he planned the activities for those people, writing down things for them to do.
LM: What about the language issue?

Johnson: He could communicate his thoughts on a project in writing — things we would want the client to know. His English wasn't good, so we rewrote his letters into the correspondence with the customers. After he went to some classes, his English improved greatly and Raul responded again. This was one of the main steps he took to becoming an account manager. He developed his English so that

he can now communicate with our customers with clarity and present himself very well to them. They can see that he has a passion and a concern for their landscape.

LM: This is a great story, and among other things it paints a picture of you as a very good mentor. How did you develop mentoring skills?

Johnson: Environmental takes mentoring seriously. We use a mentoring consulting firm for management development and training. We do a sophisticated course with them on mentoring and developing subordinates. Their ideas on mentoring are now second nature to me.

Robertson Lawn Care

At the other end of the scale, Robertson Lawn Care, Springfield, IL, has a seasonal maximum workforce of no more than eight employees. Nonetheless, it has a

tremendous record of annual business growth — achieved without expanding the workforce. President Jack Robertson attributes a big part of that success to his two senior service managers, Brian Cox (20 years with the company) and Mike Harris (19 years).

We asked for a chance to speak with the two supervisors directly, and Robertson readily agreed.



Jack Robertson and his two supervisors, Mike Harris and Brian Cox, share more than work.

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Brian Cox's story

LM: Obviously, something must have kept you at the company for 20 years! What can a contractor do to hold people and develop them into long-term supervisors?

Cox: First, find somebody who has a definite interest in the business. I do. I have a degree in agronomy from Western Illinois University, so I came into the industry with some interest and background. And spending 20 years in the business has paid off. I now teach turf management at the local junior college here in town.

I really enjoy doing that, and it's probably our biggest route to finding people who are interested in the industry. We've had some success stories from the students I've had in my class. We think a future supervisor or two might come out of that. I'm introduced to a whole new sector of people that way...and they have friends too.

LM: Why did you stay at Robertson when you could have gone elsewhere?

Cox: Working conditions. I had a burning desire to get into this type of industry. You really can't prevent people from leaving, and we've had that happen, too. We're still good friends with those folks. But if you keep people happy, and they like what they're doing and get paid a competitive wage, the chances of retaining them are a lot greater. That tells you why I'm still here. You can actually form a working relationship and a friendship over the course of the years. And friends will try not to disappoint and let you down.

Mike Harris' story

LM: Your company must do something right because both of you have been there so long. That's staggering by today's standards.

Harris: Yes, it is. This is my 19th year.

LM: What explains that?

Harris: It's just enjoyable to come to work here.

LM: And what would you advise a contractor to do to develop – and keep – a supervisor like yourself?

Harris: Give people a job that they will enjoy doing. Don't force people to work long hours, which I know other companies do. The hours are good here. We don't have a large dollar quota to fill each day. And we get along really well. As I said, it's enjoyable to come to work here.

Later, we returned to Robertson:

LM: Your supervisors revealed your secret – they enjoy coming to work!

Robertson (laughs): Imagine that – what a concept!

— The author is a contributing editor based in Mendham, NJ.

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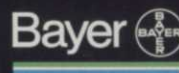
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Property at a glance

Location: Xavier University,
Cincinnati, OH

Staff: Xavier University Physical Plant

Category: School or University
Grounds

Total budget: Unavailable

Year site built: 1995

Acres of turf: 1.5

Acres of woody ornamentals: 2

Acres of display beds: 3 to 4

Total paved area: 12,000 sq. ft.

Total man-hours/week: 120

Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Entire site snow removal
- ▶ Working around students
- ▶ Having mall ready by May graduation
- ▶ Transplanting due to special soil mix

Project checklist

(Completed in last two years):

- ▶ Dance of Tears statue behind library
- ▶ Cohen Center
- ▶ Transplanting of plants around campus

On the job

- ▶ Three full-time staff, one seasonal employee, one licensed pesticide operator

Xavier University

The 1999 Honor Award Winner of the Professional Grounds Management Society for School or University Grounds

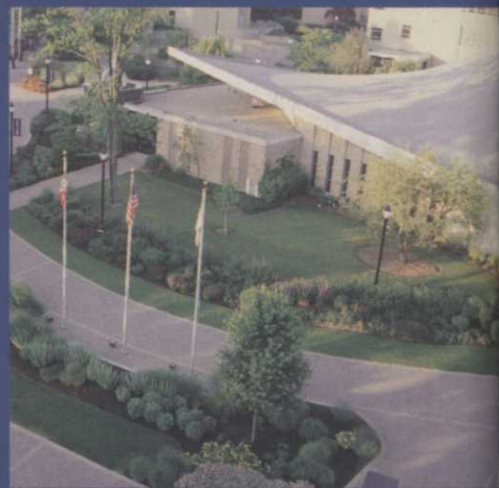
If the beauty of its campus is one of a college's selling points, then Xavier University can't have a problem recruiting new students for its freshman class.

Founded in 1831, Xavier is the fourth oldest of the 28 Jesuit institutions of higher education in the United States. The university sits on more than 100 acres in a residential section of Cincinnati, OH. Total enrollment is more than 6,500 students with 3,000 full-time undergraduates, 1,000 part-time undergraduates, and 2,500 graduate students.

In 1995, horticulturist Walter Bonvell oversaw the reconstruction of Academic Mall which, at one time, had a public road passing through it. It takes center stage on campus by serving as the venue

for many outdoor functions and preparatory and orientation classes for incoming freshmen and their parents.

All of the landscape beds and turf are irrigated ensuring that everything is as green during the hottest days of summer as it is in the spring. The landscape beds were installed with eight to 10 in. of super soil, and the turf was all sodded. On either side of the walkways, 2 1/2 ft. of plastic turf has been placed under the sod for protection against any emergency vehicles that may have to drive down the mall.



▶ Part of Academic Mall planting and chapel.

▶ Walk area between Alter Hall and library.

Editors' note: *Landscape Management* is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscapes. The 2000 winners will be named at the annual meeting of the Professional Grounds Management Society in November. For more information on the 2000 Awards, contact PGMS at 120 Cockeysville Road, Suite 104, Hunt Valley, MD; 410/584-9754. Web-site: www.pgms.org

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This annual program recognizes excellence in landscape management and complements other national programs for landscape design and construction Grand and Honor Awards are offered in 13 categories of private, public, commercial and industrial landscapes. To qualify, a landscape must be at least four years old and under continuous maintenance for at least two years. See page 48 for details.

The awards will be presented during the Professional Grounds Management Society Annual Meeting, Nov. 6 in Indianapolis, IN. Several winners will be featured in *Landscape Management* and PGMS Forum.

Entry Categories

1. Small site (budget under \$80,000)
2. Residential landscape
3. Public works sites (includes

- parkways & intersections)
4. Shopping area
5. Hospital or institution
6. Government building or complex
7. Cemetery or memorial park
8. Industrial or office park
9. Park, recreation area or athletic field OR — multiple sites under same management
10. School or university grounds OR urban universities
11. Condominium, apartment complex or planned community
12. Hotel, motel or resort
13. Amusement/theme park.

Judging

A distinguished panel of judges selected by PGMS and Landscape Management determines the winners.

This program aims to:

- Bring national recognition to grounds care.
- Recognize individual efforts leading to high landscape maintenance standards.
- Challenge landscapers to achieve a level of excellence.

Eligibility

An entrant must be professionally engaged in, and responsible for, the maintenance of grounds described in ENTRY CATEGORIES. Projects for which an entry was submitted in a design or construction award competi-

tion are eligible in the Green Star program, even if the project won an award, because maintenance is the criterion upon which an entry is judged.

Grand Award winning projects cannot re-enter this program for two years (1999 Grand Award winning projects are ineligible until 2001).

Any landscape for which the entrant has the main responsibility for maintenance and beautification may be entered. The size of the landscape operating budget is not a criterion for judging. Rather, the judges will consider the quality, challenge and performance in maintenance of the grounds for a period of at least two years.

How to Enter

All entries must include:

1. Fifteen (15) color 35mm slides — ten (10) showing the beauty of the total landscape project and five (5) showing the crew at work. **DO NOT USE 'POSED' SHOTS.** Put a descriptive caption on each slide.
2. Ten (10) 5- by 7-in. color prints — five (5) showing the beauty of the landscape and five (5) showing crew members working in areas that are difficult to maintain. **DO NOT USE 'POSED' SHOTS.** Label each with a descriptive caption.

Note: *Put your best scenes on the slides, which are critical*

to judging and awards display.

3. One recent photograph of yourself, as the person in charge, working in the landscape.

4. **INDIVIDUALLY LABEL** all slides and photographs with the name of the entrant and the site. **DO NOT USE TAPE** to mount — put in plastic or metal mounts.

5. Include a brief description of the site.

6. All entries must contain a **COVER LETTER** releasing the material for publication at the discretion of Landscape Management magazine. All entries become the property of the sponsors and may be published in Landscape Management magazine or used for other purposes the magazine deems appropriate. **NO MATERIALS WILL BE RETURNED.**

7. Enclose a check for the **ENTRY FEE:** \$125 for members of PGMS or \$180 for nonmembers. To qualify, all elements of the entry must be **COMPLETE** in one mailing envelope, including entry fee.

Deadline

The deadline for entries is Aug. 4, 2000. All entries must be submitted to the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards, c/o Professional Grounds Management Society, 120 Cockeysville Road, Suite 104, Hunt Valley, MD 21030.

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DIMENSION ^b	H	M	H	M	H	M	M	M
TEAM ^c	H	M	M	M	M	M	NR	NR
RONSTAR ^d	M	H	NR	M	M	NR	NR	NR
SURFLAN ^e	H	H	H	M	MH	M	H	H
Level of control	Medium		Medium-High		High	Not Registered		

^a™ Novartis ^b™ Rohm and Haas Co. ^c™ Dow AgroSciences ^d™ Rhone-Poulenc

Field trials confirm that PENDULUM® consistently gives you more dependable, broad-spectrum weed control than any other preemergent herbicide.

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Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards 2000 Official Entry Form and Fact Sheet



Please **PRINT CLEARLY** or type the information requested below. Check for accuracy. This information will be used for publicity purposes and awards.

Each entry must include this completed form and entry fee:

- * PGMS members — \$125
- * Combination PGMS membership and entry fee — \$250
- * Non-members — \$180

Make checks payable to the Professional Grounds Management Society.

SEND COMPLETE ENTRY AND FEE TO:

Professional Grounds Management Awards
c/o Professional Grounds Management Society
120 Cockeysville Road, Suite 104
Hunt Valley, MD 21030
Call 410/584-9754 with any questions.

NAME OF SITE: _____

State: _____ Entry Category #: _____

Name of company or agency owning this landscape:

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

**SIGNATURE OF THE COMPANY OR AGENCY OFFICIAL
CONSENTING TO THIS ENTRY AND A RELEASE FOR PUBLICITY:**

Signature: _____

Title: _____

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THIS LANDSCAPE?

- In-house staff Outside contractor

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone (____) _____

(IMPORTANT) Year site was built: _____

Years I have maintained this site: _____

Total acres maintained: _____

Acres of turf: _____

Acres of woody ornamentals: _____

Acres (or sq. ft.) of display beds: _____

Total paved area: _____

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: _____

Full time (year round): _____ Seasonal: _____

Other (please specify): _____

Licensed pesticide applicators: _____

Total man-hours per week: _____

ANNUAL EXPENDITURES:

Total budget for this site: (Including salaries) _____ \$

Equipment: _____ \$

Chemicals and fertilizers: _____ \$

Seed and plant material: _____ \$

SPECIAL MAINTENANCE CHALLENGES:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMPLETED IN THE LAST 2 YEARS:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

If selected a winner, I request the name on the award to be

(check one or both):

Name of entrant (name which will appear on plaque):
(please print) _____

Name of organization or agency:
(please print) _____

IMPORTANT: Please provide the name of the person who will accept the award at the banquet:

(please print) _____

I certify that all information provided on this form and in the accompanying entry is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that no materials will be returned and that all material may be used for publication in *Landscape Management* magazine or for other purposes deemed appropriate.

Signature of entrant _____ Date _____

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 4, 2000

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against a broad spectrum of insects, or your money back. That's because Talstar® insecticides have the longest proven residual in the industry, providing up to 6 months control of target pests.

The active ingredient, bifenthrin, is the only biphenyl pyrethroid available in the industry. And since bifenthrin contains no alpha-cyano group, Talstar® insecticides won't cause the skin or throat irritation experienced with other pyrethroids.

Talstar® insecticides can solve your toughest insect problems. In and around buildings, on lawns and ornamentals, even on golf courses, Talstar® insecticides control a broad spectrum of insects and mites.

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sensitive turf and ornamentals without damage or burning. Plus, they're easy to handle and are odor-free at label rates.

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FMC

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*See Program Guidelines for details.

Circle No. 122 on Reader Inquiry Card

We're talkin'

Dependability, price and everything nice — that's what landscape managers want trucks to be made of



Some landscape managers are fans of Ford and Dodge trucks. Others couldn't part with their Isuzus or Chevys. From super-duty one-ton trucks to lighter utility vehicles, landscape managers will use whatever they need to get the job done in the shortest amount of time, without sacrificing quality or profits. From different backgrounds and various parts of the country, our landscape managers talk trucks.

GMC's/Chevrolet's full-line

▲ T-series tilt-cab Chevy

Product: The WT5500 — a new model to the W-Series tilt cab lineup for Classes 3-5.

Best features:

- A new Duramax 7800 6-cyl. diesel engine with 200 hp at 2400 rpm and 441 lbs. per foot of torque at 1500 rpm.
- Better visibility.
- More maneuverability.
- Extra space and cab comfort — a standard bench seat with adjustable back rests.
- Allows companies in states with more restrictive CDL weight limits to maximize their load/work capabilities.
- All-steel cab with a 76.2-in. bumper-to-back of cab (BBC) dimension.

Product: C-Series medium-duty trucks — Classes 5-8

Best features:

- Available with either Caterpillar's 3126B

turbocharged/aftercooled, in-line, 6-cyl. 7.2-liter (439 cu. in.) medium duty diesel or GM's Vortec 7400 MD gasoline V-8 with sequential port fuel injection and a distributorless ignition.

- Government Vehicle Weight Ratings (GVWR) range from 18,000 to 61,000 lbs.
- The Vortec 7400 MD, available in 210 hp/325-lb. torque and 270 hp/405-lb. torque, provides better acceleration, passing and hauling/towing capability.

Product: T-Series, tilt-cab medium duty trucks span Class 5 through lower end of Class 8.

Best features:

- Available in single-axle, tandem-axle and LoPro models.
- Accommodates bodies up to 28 ft. and payloads to 40,000 lbs.

- Shorter lengths and tighter turn radius especially popular in congested areas.

Product: GMC Sierra 3500 HD, Chevrolet C3500 HD — the 3500 HD chassis cab, with 15,000-lb. GVW capacity, is the highest-capacity work truck in GMC's Sierra line and the heavy-duty workhorse of Chevrolet's C/K lineup.

Best features:

- Appeals to companies moving down in weight class to avoid the ex-



GMC Sierra 3500 HD heavy-duty workhorse

trucks

Big landscape contractors

Tom Davis, president, Bozzuto Landscape Co., Laurel, MD

Company profile: I started this company 25 years ago. When I sold it 10 years ago, our small landscape operation eventually developed into a large one. Today, we service the Baltimore, Washington, D.C. and northern Virginia markets.

Customers: We service



the commercial market including multi-family housing, office buildings, business parks and shopping centers.

Services: About 75% is grounds maintenance and the rest is upgrades or enhancements to properties we already maintain.

Crew size: We run between three- and five-man crews.

Fleet: Our total fleet operation, including our satellites, includes 40 vehicles. We have

special purchasing arrangements with both Ford and Chevrolet which allow us to buy better. We usually employ super duties equipped with an extended cab and a custom body.

Favorite feature(s): Our vehicles are our biggest marketing tool, so we keep them clean and maintain the body. Automatic transmission is important because it decreases driver fatigue.

Cost considerations: We stopped buying crew cabs and instead use extended cabs

continued on page 52

pense and difficulty of getting CDL-certified operators and those moving up from one-ton models.

- Choice of 135.5-, 159.5- and 183.5-in. wheelbases with standard dual rear wheels.

- Accommodates seven different body lengths from 8 to 16 ft. to allow operators to deliver more products.

Product: 2001 Chevy Silverado HD and GMC Sierra HD will be arriving in dealerships this coming fall.

Best features:

- Available in 3/4- and 1-ton versions.
- Powered by an enhanced standard Vortec 6000 or by the all-new Duramax diesel 6600 or Vortec 8100 V-8 engine.
- Available in either automatic or manual transmission.

Bring on the Fords

Product: F-Series

Best features:

- A powerful 5.4-liter, V-8 engine.
- Standard fourth door on F-series super cab models.
- Full-rear passenger compartment.

- Separate platform construction for models over 8,500 lbs.

Product: 2001 F-Series SuperCrew

Best features:

- First of its kind with four full-size doors and the seating area of an Expedition.
- A 17.7-meter (5.5 ft.) pickup box.



Ford F series

continued from page 51

because of the costs involved. We also have our own full-service shop which helps cut down on maintenance and repair costs. We usually buy new but sometimes will purchase nearly new from repossession services.

Dream truck: I feel we have the best trucks now for our company.

Ronald Schmoyer, president, OneSource Landscape & Golf Services, Inc., a division of OneSource Facility Services, Inc. of Tampa, FL

Company profile: We are a publicly-owned company with more than 40,000 employees. District offices are located in Allentown, PA, Port Smith & Williamsburg, VA, Atlanta, GA, Memphis, TN, San Jose, CA, and several Florida locations.

Customers: Mostly commercial accounts and a few larger residential accounts.

Services: We provide landscape maintenance and installation services.

Crew size: We usually run a three-person crew.

Fleet: F150, two-wheel drive, Regular Cab XL; 150, Super Cab, XL; F150 Super Duty Regular Cab XL; F250 Regular Cab XL; F250 Super Cab XL; F250 Super Duty Crew Cab XL; F250 Super Duty; and the Super Cab four-wheel drive XL.

Favorite feature(s): Service and reliability, fuel consumption and cab size are our biggest concerns.

Cost considerations: Leasing has proven to be cost effective for us.

Dream truck: One that will last five years and still look great!

Chris Hayes, vice president/operations, Groundmasters, Inc. of Cincinnati, OH

Company profile: We are a full-service commercial landscape maintenance company with branches in northern Kentucky and Dayton.

Customers: All commercial/industrial customers and some homeowners' associations.

Services: We do everything, including core grounds maintenance, snow removal, ice control, water management, landscape installation and parking lot sweeping.

Crew size: The majority of our crews have two to three employees each. We also have individuals dedicated to tree and shrub applications, water management, landscape and irrigation installation.

Fleet: Mostly Fords with some older

- Available with automatic transmission and two Triton TM V-8 engines — a standard 4.6-liter and optional 5.4-liter engine.
- Dual platform.

Product: 2000 F-Series Super Duty trucks — delivers Ford's improvements to these 8,500-lb. GVW to add comfort, convenience and storage.

Best features:

- Four-wheel ABS standard on Lariat trim level in the F-250 and F-350 pickup and F-350 single rear-wheel chassis.
- Optional bucket seats on XL trim levels for F-250 and F-350 pickups and F-350, -450 and -550 chassis cabs for those who need additional space for custom storage.
- Clean fuel LEV.



2000 F-series

- New manual telescoping trailer tow mirrors available later in the model year.
- Powered by the Triton 5.4-liter V-8 or 6.8-liter V-10 gasoline engines.

Dodge's lineup

Product: 2000 Dodge Dakota Quad (four-door)

Best features:

- Cab is extended to incorporate full-size, front-hinged rear doors.
- 1,450 lbs. of payload and 6,350-lb. trailer towing capacity.
- Six-passenger seating.
- Stow-and-Go 60/40 split rear seats that fold up for unrestricted rear cargo access.
- New Next Generation 4.7-liter Magnum V-8 offers improved power, refinement and durability — the only V-8s available in the compact truck segment.
- Comes in 2WD or choice of part-time or full-time 4WD models.

Product: Dakota R/T compact pickup

Best features:

- 5.9-liter Magnum V-8 and large bore.
- Four-speed transmission.
- Front and rear stabilizer bars for added control.

Product: Dodge Ram Quad



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Circle No. 125 on Reader Inquiry Card



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Circle No. 124 on Reader Inquiry Card



Chris Hayes' fleet is stocked with 20 dump trucks and two 2-ton trucks just under CDL (commercial driver's license).

GMC trucks. Our latest trucks are the F550, super duty, diesel with automatic transmission and the F450 series which also includes four-wheel drive. We have 20 dump trucks and two 2-ton trucks just under CDL (commercial driver's license).

Favorite feature(s): I value dependability the most. Crew cabs are another option because they help transport personnel comfortably and safely. Diesel engines are more cost effective for us because they're

powerful and efficient.

Cost consideration: We always buy new. We like to start from scratch and then custom build it to our own specifications by adding central hydraulics, beds, lighting, snowplow, tool boxes, salt spreader and hitches.

Dream truck: The F550 we have now.

Bill Weissenborn, fleet manager, The Groundskeeper of Tucson, AZ

Company profile: Our company was founded in Tucson in 1976. Today, we have locations in Tucson, Phoenix, Palm Springs, CA and Las Vegas, NV.

Customers: All commercial accounts.

Services: Maintenance, renovation and upgrades as well as flower and small plant installations.

Crew size: Typically around three.

Fleet: I try to stay with 3/4-ton GMC/Chevrolet pickups so I can standardize them to fit our needs. Our other main truck is an Isuzu NPR with a three-passenger cab equipped with a screened-in 16-foot dump bed.

Favorite feature(s): Automatic transmission because it makes the trucks a lot easier to operate and is cost effective.

continued on page 59

Best features:

- Extended cab, full-size pickup with four doors.
- Engine is more powerful and more fuel efficient.



Dodge Ram Quad

- Increased torque with both manual and automatic transmissions.
- Choice of power trains.

Toyota pickups

Product: Tundra full-size pickup truck

Best features:

- i-Force 4.7-liter engine is the first double-overhead cam, 32-valve V-8 offered in the segment.
- 245 hp and 315 lbs. of torque.
- Available in 2WD or 4WD in two-door regular cab with an 8-ft. bed or four-door Access Cab with a 6-1/2 ft.-bed.
- Standard V-6 engine with four-speed automatic or five-speed manual transmission.
- Optional V-8 engine with four-speed automatic transmission.

Product: Tacoma Stepside

Best features:

- Part of a value package that includes several upgrades.
- Available on regular and Xtracab 4x2 Tacoma models, powered by either four-cylinder or V-6 engines.
- Cargo box is a solid steel unit.

Isuzu's debut

Product: NPR (low-cab forward medium-duty)

Best features:

- Front and rear semi-elliptical steel alloy leaf springs and heavy duty shock absorbers.
- Standard self-adjusting front-disc and rear-drum brakes.
- 33.5-in. wide frame that can accommodate standard body installations as long as 10-20 ft.
- RBM of 316,800-lbs. ft./in. for extra strength and durability.
- Variety of wheel bases offered.

Product: Class 3 NPR and Class 4 NPR-HD

Best features:

- Channel section, ladder-type frame with rivetless top flange.
- Heat-treated carbon manganese, low-alloy steel frame is 33.5 in. wide along its total length, allowing for standardized body installations from 12 to 20 ft., with GVWRs from



It's Weatherproof.

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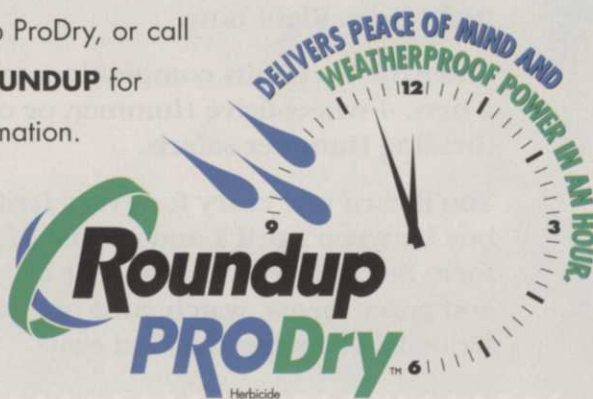
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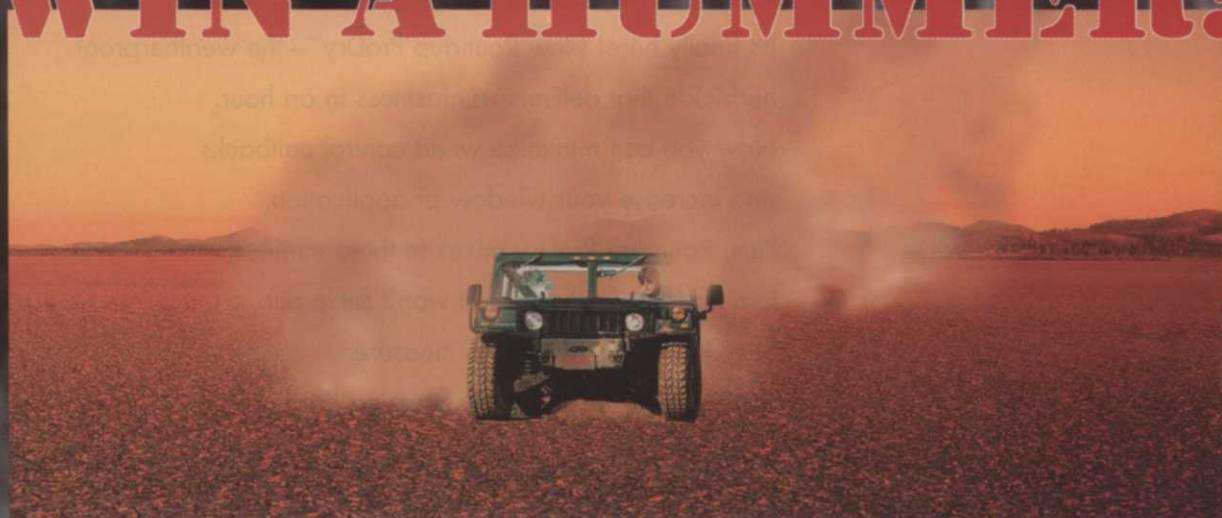
Contact your local retailer and ask to see a trial demonstration of Roundup ProDry, or call **1-800-ROUNDUP** for more information.



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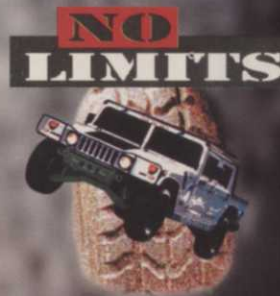
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Circle No. 129 on Reader Inquiry Card

NO LIMITS OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Entry deadline August 31, 2000

Name: _____ Title: _____

Company name: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____ E-mail: _____

Type of business: landscape contractor irrigation contractor

Date of Purchase	Distributor	Distributor Branch Location	Distributor Invoice Number	Model and Quantity of Products Purchased	FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY Number of Entries

Irritrol
SYSTEMS

If needed, attach an extra sheet for additional purchases. NOTE: Do not include copies of invoices with this entry form. Valid for purchases made between April 1 and August 31, 2000. All entries must be postmarked no later than August 31, 2000. Entry forms must be completed in full to qualify for the drawings. All purchases are subject to verification. No purchase necessary for entry. See official rules and regulations for details. One entry for each Irritrol product purchased.

Please mail completed entry form to No Limits Program, c/o Co-Optimum, 16000 Ventura Blvd., Ste. 1200, Encino, CA 91436-2730 or fax to (818) 461-6111.

I certify that the above information, which is subject to verification, is correct.

CONTRACTOR'S SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

"We value reliability, fuel efficiency and user friendliness."

— Gloria Gaus, owner, Creative Surroundings

continued from page 55

Cost considerations: We buy most of our trucks used from a major leasing company.

Dream truck: One that doesn't require fuel or a driver.

Small full-service firms

Gloria Gaus, owner/president, Creative Surroundings, Inc. of Columbia, MO

Company profile: Small, full-service firm started in 1982. No other branches.

Customers: Mostly commercial, from hospitals to fast food restaurants.

Services: About 90% is maintenance and the rest is installation.

Crew size: Typically two people.

Fleet: We have a Chevy and a Ford pickup truck as well as a Ford modified

dump truck. Our Toyota works well, especially for some of our employees who need to grab something quickly from the back of the truck.

Favorite feature(s): Our Chevy truck has a camper which protects plants from outside elements. Our Toyota gives us great gas mileage and has a king cab for tool and plant storage. The Ford dump truck gives us all the hauling power we need and we can use.

Cost considerations: We buy mostly used trucks. It's too expensive to buy new.

Dream truck: All the trucks we have now rolled into one — a large, low bed, fuel-efficient truck that can seat up to three crew members comfortably and can heal itself at night.

Mark Erbesfield, owner, Greenmark Landscaping of Atlanta, GA

Company profile: Small full-service firm/single location started 19 years ago.

Customers: Primarily residential, some commercial.

Services: Landscape maintenance, design, installation and hardscape construction.

Crew size: I employ three to four crews of one or two people.

Fleet: Of our 10 vehicles, most of them are Isuzu NPR trucks and the rest are Ford and Chevy pickups.

Favorite feature(s): We value reliability, fuel efficiency, and user friendliness. As far as maintenance, our Isuzus are reliable and adaptable to city driving.

Cost considerations: We buy used.

continued on page 60

12,000 lbs. for NPR and up to 14,500 lbs. for the NPR-HD.

- Offered in 109-in., 132.5-in. and 176-in. wheelbase options.
- Available in two hp configurations.
- Comes with a standard 33-gal. fuel tank.

Product: 6HK1 (Class 5 FRR)

Best features:

- Intercooled engine delivers 200 hp at 2400 rpm with 441 lb./torque at 1500 rpm.
- Available in manual or automatic.
- Rated at 18,000-19,500 lbs. GVW with a payload capacity ranging from 10,183 to 12,080 lbs.

Product: NQR

Best features:

- GVW rating of 17,950 lbs.
- Payload capacity 10,382 to 10,592 lbs.
- Available in four wheelbase choices.
- Can handle bodies ranging from 12 to 20 ft. in length.



NQR is available in four wheelbase choices

- Gross axle ratings range from 6,830 lbs. in the front and 14,550 lbs. in the rear.

Mitsubishi Fuso model change

Product: 2001 FG with automatic transmission.

Best features:

- Only medium-duty cabover truck with four-wheel-drive.
- The Class Three, 12,000-lb. GVWR FG is equipped with an 145-hp engine.
- Handles bodies up to 14-ft. long and is

available in two wheelbases — 109.4 and 133.1 in.

- Rugged, ladder-type frame offers a resistance bending movement (RBM) of 305,800 lb. in. per rail;
- Four-wheel heavy-duty shock absorbers;
- Passenger seats fit two people and its center section can be folded down into a work area.

UD trucks

Product: Three light duty UD trucks from Nissan Diesel America

Best features: UD1200 is rated at 12,000 lbs; UD1400 at 14,250 lbs.; and the UD1800 CS at 17,995 lbs. All three accommodate various flat beds and van, insulated, towing, landscaping and utility bodies. Trucks have a turning radius ranging from 17.4 to 25.9 feet, large windshields and tilt cab. Medium duty trucks range up to 32,900 lbs. GVWR.

"My dream truck would have a fourth door for greater accessibility."

— David Pursell, owner, U.S. Lawns franchise

continued from page 60

Dream truck: It would have a storage system, ramp for easy access, automatic transmission and a manual gas pumping system allowing drivers to fuel up only once a week.

David & Susan Pursell, owners, U.S. Lawns of Jackson, Ridgeland, MS

Company profile: Started Plant Scape Landscape Management full-time 10 years ago, then, in 1999, converted it into a franchise operation known as U.S. Lawns of Jackson.

Customers: 100% commercial.

Services: We do everything — grass cutting, insect disease control, fertilization, planting annuals, replacing trees, irrigation management, weeding and pruning.

Crew size: We employ between seven to nine people, plus more when needed.

Fleet: We have GMC/Chevrolet extra cab trucks featuring automatic transmission, towing packages for hauling trailers, receiver hitches and enough cab room to fit three people.

Favorite feature(s): Can do without extra cab but can't do without automatic transmission

Cost considerations: I usually buy used but recently purchased a 3/4-ton Chevy XCab CK2500 for pulling trailers.

Dream truck: I would love to have one with a fourth door for greater accessibility and ease.

Chemical lawn care firms

Mike & Ann Pender, owners, Classic

Gardens & Landscape, Inc. of Birmingham, AL

Company profile: We started 10 years ago as a retail garden center. Since then, we've added residential landscaping and lawn care services/chemical applications.

Customers: Primarily residential.

Services: We strictly do landscaping.

Crew size: We have four lawn care technicians and one landscaping crew.

Fleet: For chemical treatments, each employee drives a one-ton, enclosed GMC van. Our landscape crew uses Ford 250, 350 and 450 diesel trucks. The F450 is a dump truck with a 12-foot dump.

Favorite feature(s): Crew cabs are nice because they provide ample seating. Vinyl seats are important because they're easy to

continued on page 62

Sterling Truck Corp.

Product: Acterra, the most modern family of Class 5-8 medium duty trucks on the market.

Best features:

- Available in four different models, covering each of the weight classes from Class 5 to mid-range Class. Can be customized to fit customers' needs.

Models are: the

- Roominess (2 + 1 seating), superior driver ergonomics, durability.
- Nimble, rugged, easy-to use chassis platform.
- One of the lowest cab heights in the industry in its class.
- Huge windshield for greater visibility.
- Each Acterra is available with the Mercedes-Benz MBE900 engine standard or the choice of the optional Cummins ISB and ISC or Caterpillar 3126B.
- Wide-shoulder stance, sloping hood and modern lines.

- Improves fuel economy since it reaches full torque at such a low RPM of 1,500.

- Short turning radius.
- Plenty of room for an equipment box.
- Three abreast seating and an individual bucket seat for the driver.
- When fitted with a Landscape/Lawn Care Dump Body, it can carry up to three cubic yards of cargo.



Sterling medium-duty trucks 5500, with a GVWR of 19,500 lbs.; the 6500 at 26,000 lbs.; the 7,500 at 33,000 lbs. and the 8500 at 64,000 lbs..

Hino diesel trucks

Product: Hino-FA Lawn Care/Landscape work truck

Best features:

- These cab-over work trucks range in size from 15,000 lbs. GVW to 33,000 lbs.
- A turbo-intercooled JO5C engine pumps out 366-ft. lb. of torque at just 1,500 RPM.

Smaller vehicles & utility vehicles

Metro Motors

Product: MicroTruk four-wheel, off-road utility vehicle

Best features:

- A 1900-lb. payload capacity.
- Two 38 hp models available (76-in. or 85-in. bed); will transport personnel or cargo anywhere.
- All-weather cab provides the most leg room.

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Circle No. 128 on Reader Inquiry Card

"We like automatic transmission because not everybody can drive a manual."
— Gary Yunker, shop manager, Spring-Green Corp.

continued from page 60

maintain. We prefer automatic transmission which makes it easier to drive.

Cost considerations: We lease our vehicles to avoid major repair problems. Image is also important to us.

Dream truck: It's an F350, single wheels in the back, diesel, 4 x 4, automatic, four-door/crew cab.

Gary Yunker, shop manager, Spring-Green Corp. of Plainfield, IL

Company profile: We are a lawn and tree care franchise system with 103 franchises in 19 states. Spring-Green Corp. owns several franchises throughout the United States.

Customers: 85% residential.

Services: We are a full-service lawn and

tree care company that offers spraying, fertilizing and core aeration.

Crew size: One person per vehicle.

Fleet: Our equipment is custom-built to fit our Chevy, Ford, Dodge, and Isuzu trucks. Our Dodges are 3/4- to 1-ton pickups and our Isuzus are cabover W4s with flatbeds.

Favorite feature(s): Most of our trucks are Chevys. The 2500 (8,600 gross vehicle weight) and 3500 (9,200 gross vehicle weight) have a greater carrying capacity and a more durable suspension. We like automatic transmission because not everybody can drive a manual.

Cost considerations: We are a fleet buyer for GM, Dodge and Ford. That helps our franchisees buy more cost-effectively without any price hassles.

Dream truck: One that never breaks down and can be driven 200,000 miles with no repairs.

University campuses

Ronald Cooper, grounds superintendent, Western Oregon University of Monmouth, OR

University profile: A small regional liberal arts university with a five-member grounds department covering 133 acres.

Services: Everything from installation and maintenance to hauling equipment.

Crew size: Depends on the job, but usually small.

Fleet: We have several Ford S10 Rangers, four-cylinder pickups with canopies, three one-ton flat beds (a Dodge,

continued on page 64

- Electronic ignition.
- Heavy duty shock absorbers.
- Four-wheel hydraulic brakes.

John Deere

Product: 6 x 4 Gator

Best features:

- 18-hp, liquid-cooled, 2-cyl. engine.
- Four-wheel drive and differential lock for extra traction.
- Shares the arc-welded unibody design and front suspension



John Deere Gator features 4wd

of the 4 x 2.

- 1,200-lb. towing capacity.
- Low ground pressure and a low center of gravity protects the turf.

Product: Turf General

Best features:

- Available in a 23.5 hp diesel and a 26 hp gas model.
- Five-speed, fully-synchronized transmission.
- Hydrostatic steering.
- Large operator station.
- A 2,650-lb. payload capacity.

White Bear

Product: Whitebear TJ1010FLA

"Jumbo Cab" off-road truckster

Best features:

- Three-cyl. liquid-cooled 39 hp engine.
- Payload of 1,900 lbs.

- Optional body styles include a dump bed, personnel carrier, aluminum topper, scissors lift, beverage cart and a wide array of trams and people movers.


Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products

Product: Cushman Jr. Turf-Truckster

Best features:

- A 2,000 lb.-rated capacity.
- Offers the choice of a no-rust polyethylene dump box or a 47-in. flatbed with sides and a tailgate.
- Standard hydraulic system powers the dump box/bed.
- Three-wheel turf chassis features a 17-ft. clearance circle.
- A 18 hp Kohler Command V-Twin engine.
- A durable 6.5-in. commercial duty clutch.

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◀ Ron Cooper purchases vehicles through Oregon's surplus program.

Ford and GMC) and an Isuzu cargo delivery van. We also have a full size half-ton pickup truck as well as a one-ton, 1953 International flatbed with a dump box. We mostly use Cushman utility vehicles on the campus.

Favorite feature(s): We don't need any more power than a four-cylinder unless we go off campus. Automatic transmission is important since many of our students can't drive a stick.

Cost considerations: We never buy new because we can't afford to. I'm able to

purchase good vehicles through our state's surplus program.

Dream truck: A heavy duty, one-and-a-half ton truck with a swap loader — one where you could put different kinds of beds

on it with a dump box. It would also have short side racks to haul dirt or turn it into a dumpster.

Gregg Parks, grounds superintendent, University Of Akron, Akron, OH

University profile: Grounds crews cover 330 acres including 45 parking lots, three parking decks, athletic fields and buildings.

Services: Landscape installations to snow, litter and even gum removal.

Crew: 14 full-time staff persons and between six and 30 part-time temporaries.

Fleet: One-ton F250 dump truck, several medium size Ford tractors and large size tractors with front end loaders, five John Deere Gators and eight Cushman's.

Favorite feature(s): A good turning radius and automatic transmission.

Cost considerations: Lowest bid.

Dream Truck: Our Dodge 2500, as far as snow plowing capabilities, visibility, hood shape and mirror configurations. **LM**



Gregg Parks favors automatic transmission.

Super truck

Super Lawn has just built a Super Cab truck that will hold up to seven passengers comfortably. They also have a limited number of pre-built trucks available for immediate delivery. Each pre-built truck has the basic Super Lawn Truck system already installed. Also, for the very first time, the company has two used trucks in stock — a 1999 Isuzu NPR with 51,000 miles and a 1997 Isuzu NPR with 41,000 miles. Each truck is equipped with automatic transmission and a/c. For more information contact

www.superlawntruck.com/customers.htm.

Haul Master, Inc.

Product: Huskie HD

Best features:

- Engine — 16 hp, 480cc, overhead valve V-twin, gasoline, four-cycle, cast iron bores, premium long-life bearings and valve train
- Electronic ignition.
- 20 amp alternator with voltage regulator, 30 amp-hour battery.
- Frame — truck style, heavy wall rectangular box and channel section steel with full steel belly pan.
- Fully independent coil spring over heavy duty hydraulic shock absorbers.
- 1,000-lb.+ passenger load capacity.

CheTech

Product: PUG 4x4 utility vehicle

Best features:

- Designed for substantial workloads or challenging terrain.

- Allows all four wheels to maintain contact with the terrain.
- A fully-articulated frame that twists and turns into the center.

Columbia ParCar Corp.

Product: New models of 13 hp and commercial vehicles

Best features:

- The GU2400 Columbia Utilitruck has a 36-in. length bed and 2400-lb. capacity.
- The GU2400XB Columbia Extended Bed Utilitruck features a 60-in. length bed and 2400-lb. capacity.
- The C10G Columbia Tram passenger vehicle seats up to 10 people.



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Plus, the innovative new chemistry behind MACH 2 Turf Insecticide requires no immediate

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Junction offers broad spectrum, contact and preventive disease control in ornamental nurseries and landscapes. Use it alone or tankmixed, it's the essential fungicide for controlling leaf spots, *Alternaria*, *Botrytis*, bud & petal blights, mildews, gray mold and *Anthracnose*. It's labeled on a wide range of ornamental plant species. Its multi-site action makes it a vital component in resistance management programs. The convenient dry flowable packaging allows easy handling, mixing and disposal. Apply it this season.

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Insecticides *a la mode*

The bugs are the same but insecticides' modes of action are changing. Learn how effective they can be

BY DR. PATRICIA J. VITTUM

Most of you are aware that the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) passed in 1996, and this law is impacting the availability of pesticides for use in turf and ornamental settings. Based on concerns about cumulative and aggregate exposures to pesticides, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency determined that the registrations of organophosphate insecticides (OPs) should be reviewed first. This was in part because OPs affect the nervous systems of people and their pets, and so they tend to be more acutely toxic to vertebrates than many other classes of pesticides.

One byproduct of this governmental regulation and other trends has been the proliferation of new insecticides that have strikingly different modes of action against their target insects. While some insecticides, such as fipronil (Chipco Choice) and imidacloprid (Merit), had already been reg-

istered, other new chemistry is now under development. In addition, there are insect growth regulators like halofenozide (Mach 2). Meanwhile, several microbial pesticides have been identified and developed, and finally are reaching the market. Let's review what has been happening in each category.

Chemical action for results

1. Case of nerves — Turf and ornamental managers have used organophosphates (OPs) widely for 30 years or more, and some of the more familiar products include acephate (Orthene), chlorpyrifos (Dursban), diazinon, fonofos (Mainstay or Crusade), isofenphos (Oftanol) and trichlorfon (Dylox or Proxol). Each of these is a cholinesterase inhibitor, working on the nervous system.

How do they work? The organophosphates stop (or inhibit) cholinesterase from doing its part to end a neural impulse. The result? Impulses continue to move through the nerve, in effect poisoning the insect and

causing tremors and convulsions, difficulty in breathing or loss of bodily functions.

2. Pyrethroid mystery — While the precise mode of action for pyrethroids is not fully understood, they appear to affect the permeability of the membrane in the central region of a cell. Normally when an impulse moves along a cell, the cell membrane gets "leaky" and some sodium ions rush in from the surrounding body fluid, changing the cell's electrical charge. These ions then have to get back to where they started from, but if the cell membrane becomes a little "stiff," it will not allow them to return to their original positions. The cell stays in an active state, sending an impulse that really isn't there. The cell is also unable to recognize when a new impulse should be sent.

Pyrethroids appear to affect both insect and vertebrate nervous systems at this level, and many pyrethroids are toxic to fish in particular. Examples include bifen-

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thrin (Talstar), cyfluthrin (Tempo), deltamethrin (Deltagard) and lambda-cyhalothrin (Battle, Scimitar). Pyrethroids are used most commonly against surface and thatch insects (chinch bugs, webworms, cutworms) in turf or against a variety of insects in landscape plantings.

3. Block that chloride — Fipronil (Chipco Choice) belongs to a class of chemicals called phenyl pyrazoles. Fipronil, which is used against mole crickets in the Southeast, interferes with the passage of chloride ions through a channel in the nerve cell. Insect nerves are more sensitive to this disruption, so fipronil is much more toxic to insects than vertebrates.

4. Bad news for suckers — Thiomethoxam (Meridian) should be released soon by Novartis and will be marketed as Flagship in the ornamentals market. It controls a variety of sucking and chewing insects, following contact or ingestion by the target pest. It is absorbed rapidly into the vascular tissue of the plant,

so its systemic qualities will make it a good choice against several common ornamentals pests, including aphids, whiteflies and mealybugs. It is also effective against several species of white grubs. It has a relatively long residue (about 50 days in soil) and is much less toxic to vertebrates than several of the more traditional insecticides that have been used over the past 30 years.

Thiomethoxam is in the thianicotinyl class of insecticides and is considered a nicotinoid. As such, it mimics the action of acetylcholine in the synapse, so it may bind to the receiving cell, tricking it into sensing an impulse to be sent. At low doses, this leads to a stimulation of the cell, but at higher doses, the system shuts down. Insects that come in contact with the material or ingest it demonstrate altered behavior within an hour or two, stopping feeding or no longer using their antennae in a normal manner.

Growth regulators — mixed-up molting

1. Too juvenile — Insects go through a

series of molts, during which they absorb the old exoskeleton (a complex structure that serves as the outer "skin" as well as a place for muscles to attach) and produce a new and slightly larger exoskeleton. Molting is an energy-expensive process that is regulated by hormones, some of which send a signal to the insect's body to remain in a juvenile stage — for example, a caterpillar, a grub or a maggot.

As long as that "juvenile" hormone is present, the insect cannot molt to the adult stage and cannot reproduce. Several juvenile hormones have been identified and developed commercially, and are used to reduce mosquito populations (methoprene) or to control whiteflies in greenhouses (kinoprene).

2. Hurry up and molt — Other chemicals interfere with the process of molting itself, usually by interfering with the natural timing of producing the new exoskeleton. One such material, halofenozide (Mach 2), is called a "molt accelerating

continued on page 70



Insecticides in the thianicotinyl class can be used to control grub damage like this.



Damage like this from chinch bugs can be extensive unless treated with the right insecticides.

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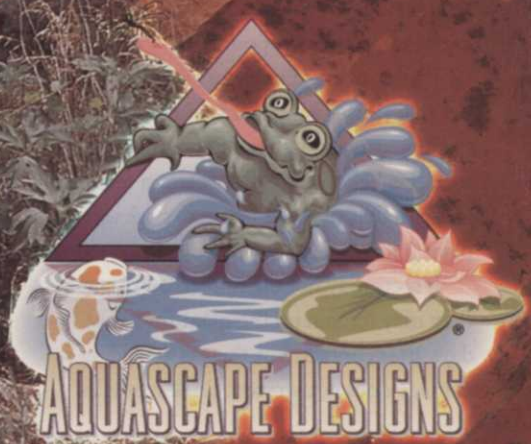
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continued from page 68

compound" because it induces an immature insect to molt before that insect has had an opportunity to store up the energy reserves it will need to complete the process. The insect is doomed to fail — it may begin the process but abort it in the middle, so it may end up with characteristics that are, for example, part first instar and part second instar.

The insect stops feeding shortly after it encounters the material and usually dies within two or three weeks. One advantage of a molt accelerating compound is that vertebrate animals do not have an analogous process — in other words, we don't molt. So Mach 2 is considered much less toxic to people and their pets than most other insecticides currently on the market.

Mach 2 is used in turf settings against several species of white grubs (although the application rate varies with species) and appears to have good activity against several turf caterpillars as well.

Feeding deterrents

Some compounds induce insects to stop feeding shortly after they come in contact with the material. These compounds are called "feeding deterrents," some of which may be distasteful and cause the insect to move on to a more tasty meal. Others may repel an insect from landing on a plant. Still others actually interfere with the physiology of the insect, plugging up its digestive system and making it impossible to feed further. Such insects die quickly after exposure to the compound.

Pymetrozine (Endeavor) is a new product that causes aphids or whiteflies to cease feeding, usually within a few hours of contact. It is believed to affect certain feeding muscles that the insects use to suck up plant juices.

Insects may not die immediately and they may remain on the plant for a few days after contact, but they stop feeding so damage does not worsen. Endeavor is la-

LM'S TAKE:

Using the *new* insecticides

1. Products will continue to evolve from more naturally occurring substances or processes.
2. Because of this, new products will continue to become more species-specific (targeted).
3. More and more "traditional" products will come under increased scrutiny in the EPA's evaluation of products for the Food Quality Protection Act.
4. This will encourage even more reduced rates of toxicity for products on all species — from humans to beneficial insects.
5. More "targeted" insecticides are becoming much more concentrated and potent at smaller amounts because of their modes of action. What used to require gallons might only require ounces now.
6. Don't expect prices to drop, however. The cost of finding, developing, testing and getting approval for new products is higher than ever.

beled for use as a foliar spray in greenhouses, landscape ornamentals and some nursery settings, among other sites. It has a short residual (will not remain active for a long time on the plant) and has a low level of toxicity to beneficial insects, including honey bees and various predatory insects.

A 'biorational' product

Spinosad (Conserve) is a byproduct of a soil actinomycete (a bacterium), *Saccharopolyspora spinosa*, which has become a popular tool for use in integrated pest management programs. It is effective against several species of caterpillars, but it is relatively specific so it has minimal impact on several beneficial predatory insects.

While it affects acetylcholine receptors on the receiving nerve cells, it appears to do so in a manner that is markedly different than products like organophosphates — and it does *not* appear to interfere with the receptors in vertebrates to the same degree. As a result, it is much less toxic to mammals and other vertebrate nontarget organisms.

When an insect encounters Spinosad, it is incapacitated almost immediately. There are indications that insects are less likely to

develop resistance to Spinosad than to some other insecticides.

Making a choice

With the recent addition of several new kinds of insecticides to the turf and ornamentals market, you now have lots of options. Each new product has some strengths, and can be incorporated into an IPM program. Some are selective and have minimal impact on nontarget organisms, while others are much less toxic than some of the older, more traditional materials. Experiment with the new compounds and determine which ones meet your own needs most effectively. **LM**

— The author is associate professor in the Department of Entomology of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA

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Mower madness

New designs in walk-behinds

BY CURT HARLER/

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Next month is time to celebrate *Landscape Management's* May Mower Month. The first lawn mower was patented on May 9, 1899. Today, the world of walk-behind mowers ranges from 20-in. hand-pushed units to ground-covering self-propelled workhorses with transmissions and independent hand brakes. Both can be found on the typical landscaper's truck.

As the old adage reminds us, the key to getting the most out of a walk-behind unit is not to send a boy to do a man's job — or vice-versa. Out in the field crew members, especially the newer ones, tend to use the big units for every job. They are more impressive to use and, being self-propelled, go faster and take less effort. However,

they also have a disturbing tendency to eat bedding plants and miss tight areas close to buildings, headstones, or trees.

On the other hand, it's a real waste of time to use a small walk-behind or trim mower on any sizable area of turfgrass.

While this may seem obvious to a manager with 10 year's experience, it's quite common to see workers using the wrong tool on a job site. Especially early in the season, instruct or remind the crews to tailor the size of the mower to the size of the job. The result will be lower fuel expenses, more efficient use of labor and fewer customer complaints.

ground speed is 8.5 mph.
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FERRIS INDUSTRIES
800/933-6175

www.ferrisindustries.com

The HydroWalk DD from Ferris Industries, Munnsville, NY, features dual unitized Eaton hydros for zero-turn mobility and faster mowing. These transmissions are backed with a 3-year warranty, on top of the full 2-year machine warranty. The HydroWalk has a wide, low stance for top traction



What to look for

- ▶ Height adjustability of deck/blades
- ▶ Easy grip on throttle handles
- ▶ Safety features like auto-shutoff
- ▶ A sizable fuel tank
- ▶ How easy is it to start?

BLACK ROCK
800/314-8984

Black Rock Mfg., Louisville, KY assembles mowers with quality components like the Peerless heavy-duty five-speed transmission and decks of 7-gauge steel. Three hydrostatic drive models come in 48-, 52- and 61-in. widths. Choose from a 14-hp OHV Kawasaki or 17-hp Twin OHV engine. Dual reservoirs with filters to eliminate cross-contamination, cold start, flexible 2-piece deck and frame are standard. Top

Im reports

and stability. Large, 18-in. drive tires give good traction in adverse conditions. Deck options include 48-, 52- or 61-in. The SD comes with 36- or 48-in. decks.

Circle #264

ENCORE MANUFACTURING

800/467-4255

www.encoreequipment.com

The Hydro Pro line from Encore Manufacturing Co., Beatrice, NB, is designed to work all day with its hydrostatic drive and large fuel tank. Units come in cutting widths from 36 in. to 60 in. Tough, 7-gauge wear strips and steel support channels assure that the mower can stand up to commercial use. Engine choices include 14-hp and 19-hp models.

Circle #265

EXCEL

800/395-4757

www.excelhustler.co

The Hustler Hydro walk behind from Excel Industries, Hesston, KS, eliminates the need for



Hustler

trimming with H-Bar steering. All functions – speed, forward/reverse, turning, breaking – are controlled with one handlebar. Unit comes with 37-, 48- or 54-in. full floating deck and is powered by either a 15-hp or a 17-hp Kawasaki engine. Mowers have the largest standard tires in the industry.

Circle #266

GREAT DANE

704/846-6617

The Gateway dual-hydro walk-behind from Great Dane, Sellersburg, IN, is 36-in. wide to scoot through gates with the wing up and a full 52-in. wide with wing deployed. It comes with a 17-hp Kawasaki or 18-hp Kohler E/S engine, and moves at seven mph forward and 2.5 in reverse. Designed for curb edge mowing, cutting under pine tree limbs and other jobs requiring maneuverability, both have 5-gal. fuel

tanks to keep going all day.

Circle #267

EXMARK

402/223-6300

www.exmark.com

The Metro walk-behind from Exmark Mfg. Co., Beatrice, NE, combines the 32-, 36- or 48-in. TriVantage deck with dependable, gear-drive traction. A new 15-hp. Kawasaki V-twin



Exmark

engine runs smoother and with less vibration than single-cylinder engines. Drive belts can be changed without tools, and light grip tension, height-adjustable handle and easy-to-reach padded knee shifter increase operator comfort.

Circle #268

HONDA

678/339-2600

www.honda.com

The new HRC7113TXA TruGear mower from American Honda Motor Co., Alpharetta, GA, comes in two versions: the 36- and 48-in. Both are powered by a Honda 13-hp OHV engine with oil filter and feature a transistorized magneto ignition. Mowers allow seven positions on the deck from 1.5 in. to 4.5 inches. They have a gear mesh transmission with ball-bearing supported axles with four forward and one reverse speed. Mowers come standard with hour meter.

Circle #269

HOWARD PRICE

314/532-7000

The Turf Blazer from Howard Price, Chesterfield, MO, has an easy-to-remove deck cover and double-wide traction belt for extra grip in wet conditions. Deck is 7-gauge on the side,

10-gauge top. The 32- and 36-in. models handle tight areas, while the 48- and 52-in. ones handle flat-out mowing production, allowing one person to cut over 18 acres a day. Fingertip control of each wheel brake gives maximum control.

Circle #270

JOHN DEERE

800/537-8233

www.deere.com

Several enhancements to the 14-hp HD45 and 17-hp HD75 make them easier to use. John-Deere, Research Triangle Park, NC, equips



John Deere

them with an OHV 4-cycle gas engine, pressurized lubrication and an oil filter for durability. Electric start is standard on the 75; optional on the 45. Choose from a 10-gauge 36-in., or the 11-gauge steel 38- and 54-in. mower decks. Cutting height is adjusted without tools using spring-loaded quick-pull pins. Adjustable rear gauge wheels to eliminate scalping are standard on many decks.

Circle #271

LAWN-BOY

800/525-0059

The 21-in. commercial mower from Toro's Lawn-Boy division, Bloomington, MN, is available in the HP push model with a Dura-Force 6.5-hp commercial two-cycle engine with side discharge, or in the SP version with a 3-speed self-propelled version. At 4.25 quarts, unit has industry's biggest fuel tank.

Circle #272

continued on page 76

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Im reports

continued from page 74

HUSQVARNA 800/HUSKY62

www.husqvarna.com

Built for the punishment of everyday commercial use, the 600 mower from Husqvarna,



Husqvarna

Charlotte, NC, is powered by a 6-hp Robin OHV engine. Self-propelled model has a variable drive allowing for speeds to 4 mph. The 21-in., rolled-under lip deck offers superior air-flow for bagging and added strength. Rear bagger handles up to 2.5 bushels of clippings. Cut heights range to 3.5 in. in four positions. **Circle #273**

LESCO 800/321-5325

Lesco Inc. Rocky River, OH, updated its fabricated rotary mowers, enhancing features for



Lesco

the commercial cutter. All mowers will be powered by Kawasaki engines ranging from the 15-hp single-cylinder OHV to the 21-hp twin cylinder

OHV. Units come with 36-, 48- and 52-in. hydro drives, each with dual hydro pumps and drive motors allowing for true zero-radius turns. Twin ground-speed control levers allow on-the-go adjustment to ensure straight-line tracking and excellent hillside control. All come with 5-gallon fuel tanks. **Circle #274**

MTD PRO 877/MTD-PRO1

www.mtdpro.com

The DH-1648 from MTD Pro, Cleveland, OH, is a 16-hp recoil-start mower with a 48-in. deck.



MTD Pro

Unit has three blades and a deck which adjusts from 2 in. to 4 in. Comes standard with dual hydro transmission, drum brakes and high-end tires on front and back. The 5-gal. fuel tank keeps this machine running all day. **Circle #275**

RICH MANUFACTURING 765/436-2744



Rich Manufacturing

Get two mowers in one: the Convertible line from Rich Manufacturing, Thorntown, IN, works as a hydro walk-behind and as a zero-turn rider. Three models offer a 17-hp

Kawasaki FH500 V-twin, a 20-hp Kohler CV20 V-twin or a 25-hp Kohler CV25 V-twin with oil cooler. The 10-gauge steel decks, with reinforcement plate on the front for durability come in 48-, 52- and 61-in. sizes. **Circle #276**

SCAG POWER EQUIPMENT 920/387-0100

www.scag.com

New from Scag, Mayville, WI, is the Ultimate hydro walk-behind, with a floating cutter deck



Scag Power Equipment

and heights adjustable in the field to 4.5 in. without tools. Self-adjusting, spring-loaded idler pulleys save time, effort and repair costs by keeping belts in perfect adjustment. Operator control levers increase productivity and comfort with less hand-grip reach and lighter spring tension. A 36-in. deck and 15-hp Kohler model or a 48-in. deck and 17-hp Kawasaki model are offered. **Circle #277**

SNAPPER 770/957-9141

www.snapper.com

Handle big jobs with the Pro Hydro SPLH140KWE from Snapper, McDonough,

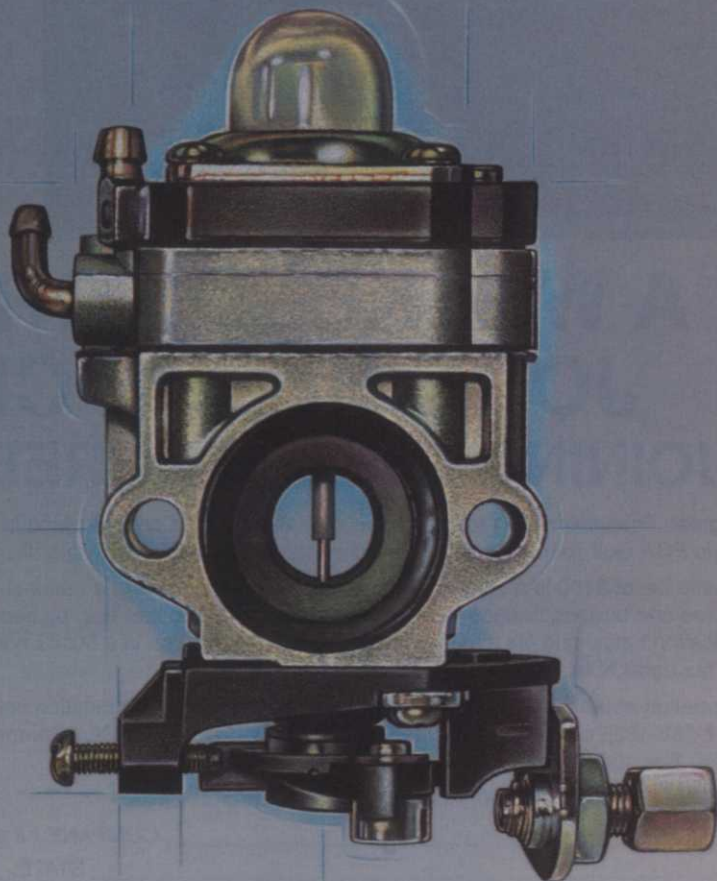


Snapper

GA. Comes standard with a Kawasaki 14-hp OH engine, with other size engines are available to 22 hp. Full floating steel deck ranges

continued on page 79

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Im reports

continued from page 76

all the way from 36- to 61-in. versions. Field-serviceable spindle assemblies make it possible for operators to rebuild the spindle assembly with standard tools while it is still mounted to the mower deck. Accutrak system provides on-the-go fingertip hydrostatic adjustment for tracking control with no tools required whatsoever.

Circle #278

SOLO

49-70-31-3010

www.solo-germany.com

The new Primo 553 SL made by Solo, Sindelfingen, Germany and distributed through local dealers is a self-propelled gas mower with electric start. Powered by a Honda-OHV 4-cycle engine, it generates 5.5 hp and cuts a 21-in. wide swath. Choose eight cutting heights for perfect match to any kind of conditions. Unit features metal wheels and a blade brake.

Circle #279

SWISHER

660-747-8650

www.swisherinc.com

Mow down those tight spaces with the 19-, 20- or 22-in. push mowers from Swisher, Warrensburg, MO. Lightweight, rust-proof aluminum cast frame makes handling easy. Each is available with a 3.75-hp Briggs and Stratton engine, with upgrades available. Steel ball-bearing wheels run longer.

Circle #280

TORO

800/476-9673

www.toro.com

The ProLine 32-, 36-, 37-, 44- and 52-in. Floating Deck midsize mowers from Toro, Bloomington, MN, come with five engines: 15-hp and 17-hp Kawasaki Twin OHV; 13-hp and 15-hp Kohler Command PRO; or a 12.5-hp Kawasaki. The 36-, 44- and 52-in. decks are equipped with the exclusive Super Flow System. The 32- and 37-in. Recycler mulching decks provide decreased vibration, reduced noise and increased



Toro

power to the blades for maximum productivity in even the toughest conditions. All have a forward ground speed of up to 6 mph.

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BY BALAKRISHNA RAO

Tree dieback

On one of our properties a number of oak trees and a few conifers show various degrees of decline and dieback.

Any idea what may be the problem?

— MARYLAND

A general tree decline and dieback can often be attributed to a root disorder, root damage or a root dysfunction.

Begin your inspection by checking the base of the tree for proper root flare. If you don't see the flare, that is an indication of fill damage, because of either excess soil and/or mulch. This would require root crown excavation using a shovel. Dig the soil near the base of trunk and gently tap the bark. If it sounds hollow or if you find any evidence of a whitish fungal mycelial growth (rhizomorph), this indicates *Armillaria* root rot. In conifers, look for a whitish fungal mycelial rhizomorph while performing root crown excavation. Whitish mycelial growth suggests *Armillaria* root rot caused by *Armillaria* sp.

If you have many trees to examine, consider using compressed air or high-pressure water to excavate.

In addition to a white mat of fungal mycelium under the bark or in the root collar, the infected tree's foliage will discolor and drop. As a first sign of disease, infected conifers will often exude resin from their roots and base. As the fungus matures, it produces clusters of honey-colored mushrooms at the tree's base. These mushrooms are not fused, but grow in a clump and have a characteristic ring on the stem below the cap. The cap is brownish at the top and produces a whitish spore at the bottom.

The shoestring mycelial rhizomorph

may extend about 4 ft. to 5 ft. high on trunks of trees. By that time, the tree usually dies because of restricted water and nutrient translocation.

Armillaria sp. can enter the tree through fungal spores, rhizomorphs or by root graft. Once inside, it can cause rot or decay of roots eventually killing the tree. Later, rhizomorph grows out into the soil from infected plant issues.

To manage *Armillaria* root rot, detect the presence of infection as evidenced by the whitish rhizomorph. If a large portion of the trunk is infected, remove the tree promptly to avoid hazard. If a small area is infected, barktrace the infected tissue and let it air-dry. Remove excess soil and put it back before cold winter temperature occurs. There are no fungicides to manage this.

This disease is associated with stress. Reduce exposure to extremes in moisture and/or temperature. Often, excess moisture around the base of the trunk is a major predisposing factor. Keep the mulch cover 2-in. to 3-in. thick and about six inches away from the trunk to avoid damaging sensitive bark and cambium at the root collar area. Provide proper watering, mulching, fertilizing and pest management.

How does Mach 2 stack up?

How does Mach 2 perform compared to Merit for grub control?

— MICHIGAN

Mach 2 from Rohmid Corp. is a molt-accelerating compound that speeds up a grub's molting process (see "Insecticides a la mode" story on page 66). Ingestion causes immature insects to undergo a pre-

mature molt and die. It affects the natural metamorphosis, and uses halofenozide as its active ingredient. It controls all white grubs, cutworms, sod webworms and armyworms and comes in spray, granular and fertilizer formulations for use on turfgrass. Rohmid claims that it will provide season-long control of grubs, and can give three to four weeks of residual control for surface feeding insects. One benefit of Mach 2 is that there is no need for immediate watering.

Because of its preventive and curative activity, it can be applied early like Merit, or later as a rescue curative treatment.

Mach 2 performed well for controlling sold webworm and black cutworm, performing equal to Sevin in university trials. Mach 2 applied in May before eggs are laid, or in June when eggs are laid, provided 100% control of European chafer in university trials. University of Nebraska scientists found that Mach 2 resulted in 79% control as compared to 58% control for Merit of European chafer when applied against second instar grubs. At this stage, grubs feed actively and can cause extensive damage. In this situation, consider using other insecticides such as Dylox or Oftanol.

Mach 2 is not known to be affected by pH hydrolysis or enhanced bacterial degradation. Merit and Mach 2 provide similar results for all white grub and turfgrass insect management. Read and follow label specifications for best results.

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

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO: "Ask the Expert" Landscape Management; 7500 Old Oak Blvd.; Cleveland, OH 44130, or email: sgibson@advanstar.com. Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear.



products

TECH CENTER

Deer-terrent

Benner's Gardens believes it has the answer to keeping pesky deer away from precious plants: a virtually invisible mesh barrier that easily attaches to trees or posts. David Benner, retired professor of ornamental horticulture, invented



the eight-foot high polypropylene fence to protect his own plants, and has had positive results. The lightweight, high strength fencing can hardly be seen and doesn't detract from the appearance of the property. Fencing accessories include a nylon guide cable, high-tensile reinforcement wire, Stanley hogringer staple gun, corner post braces and a rabbit/groundhog barrier.

For more information contact Benner's Gardens at 800/753-4660 or www.bennersgardens.com / circle no. 250

Hard workin' utility vehicle



E-Z-GO Textron's new workhorse ST 480 features an 800-lb. payload capacity, 48-in. load bed and a 16-hp., 4-cycle 480-cc twin cylinder Vanguard V-twin engine, allowing the vehicle

Wide open grass maintenance

Land Pride says its new 35 Series 3-section rotary cutter is perfect for wide open grass maintenance. It features a 15,000 fpm blade tip speed for a clean cut in material up to 1 1/2-in. diameter. Standard stump jumpers and heavy-duty blades help operators handle uneven terrain. The three sections are hinged to allow operators to shape the cutter to the job. The cutter is also offered with 3-in. and 4-in. cutting capacity.

The Land Pride flail mowers are designed to do everything from cut grass to shred prunings. The 20 Series flail mower offers a two-position hitch for offsetting the mower, enabling closer cutting along buildings, fences or roadsides. The 30 Series flail mower offers 3/16-in. deck material and uses a threaded rod to easily offset the hitch by nearly 8 inches. The 40 Series features heavy forged hammers, a precision balanced rotor and adjustable brush rake teeth on the rear. For more information contact Land Pride at 785/820-8692 or www.landpride.com / circle no. 251



to reach speeds of up to 17 mph. Multiple leaf spring suspension with hydraulic shock absorbers and self-compensating single reduction rack and pinion steering make it a comfy ride, too. Options include a sun canopy, all-weather enclosure, light bar with beacon, taillights and brake lights, turn signals with 4-way flasher, windshield kit, right and left locking glove box and an hour meter.

For more information contact E-Z-GO Textron at 706/798-4311 or www.ezgo.com / circle no. 252

Around a pond

Oly-Ola Sales has come out with Pond Liner edging designed to hold liners used for pond and water gardens permanently in place. The Pond Liner edging, made of strong, black vinyl, provides a natural looking border, allows plant materials or turf to grow up to the edge of a pond and provides landscape contractors with the versatility to install attractive ponds with or without rock borders.

For more information contact Oly-Ola at 800/334-4647 or www.olyola.com / circle no. 253

Need a lift?

The Extractor mechanical fork features five interchangeable rudder-guided tines, equipment with soil retaining blades and fins, quick-connect tine interlocking system and alloyed teeth. Application includes B&B, shrub, tree, rock and material removal, digging and loading units currently for all skid steers, 3-pt. hitches and ASV.

For more information contact Extractor CDM Inc. at 509/725-8443 / circle no. 254

Grow, turf, grow

Grow turf to the max with Novartis' new Primo Maxx, a turf growth regulator that eliminates odor while providing the same performance of the traditional Primo Liquid. Primo Maxx features a microemulsion concentrate formulation that contains no petroleum solvents, mixes clear in water, is odorless and won't clog screens. Because of its small particle size — 0.1 micron — it mixes completely and will not settle out in a spray tank. Primo Maxx is available in both 2x1 gal. cases and a 10-gal. LinkPak container.

For more information contact Novartis at 1-800-395-TURF or www.cp.novartis.com / circle no. 255

See the light

Tired of trying to find a good deck light for his customers, Garry Ballard, president of North Oaks, decided to come up with his own. His lights are low voltage ones for decks, docks, patios and gardens. Features include cast aluminum body, copper vein color power coat to match decks, 60-in. wire leads and Copper top on Postmount model. North Oaks claims that one light illuminates 50 to 60 sq. ft.

For more information contact North Oaks at 888/636-2277 or www.northoaks.com / circle no. 256

Spread anything

The JRCO stainless steel frame electric broadcast spreader fits commercial riding and walk-behind mowers and is available with either a stainless steel foot-operated gate or push/pull cable. The polyethylene hopper has a capacity of 2.2 cu. ft. or 130 lbs. It improves productivity

with increased ground speed and a controlled 5 to 24-ft. spread. The heavy-duty broadcaster is ideal for spreading all types of granular or pelletized fertilizer, seed, fire ant bait and ice melting products.

For more information contact JRCO at 800/966-8442 / circle no. 257

Super surfer

Great Dane Power Equipment says its Super Surfer zero-turn stand-on mower stands out from the crowd because the platform, which is moved forward from behind the rear wheels, results in a dramatic effect on the center of gravity, improved operator comfort and hill climbing ability. Other features include a floating deck and easy height of cut adjustments, light and compact design, top speed of 10 mph, Hydro-Gear pumps, 20-in. rear tires, reverse speed adjustments, wheel motors with 20% more torque and direct access for blade



change. The Super Surfer is available in 36-, 48-, 52- and 61-in. cutter decks and engine options up to 23 hp.

For more information contact Great Dane at 812/246-8770 or circle no. 258

Rugged loaders

Four Mustang 2000 Series skid-steer loaders boast SAE load ratings ranging from 1,300 to

continued on page 85

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continued from page 83
2,100 lbs. Mustang claims that the loaders' axle torque and break-out force are unmatched in the industry. Mustang's Load Sensing hydraulic system deliv-

ers the precise amount of power needed to any attachment.

For more information contact Mustang at 507/451-7112 / circle no. 259

Portable power wash

The Cyclonator, a modular, recycling, high-pressure wash rack system, provides a cost effective means of cleaning equipment while preventing ground water contamination and reducing water/sewage costs. It can be used indoors or outdoors and set-up or taken down in less than an hour. It has no special plumbing or electrical hook-ups and requires no digging or concrete work. It comes with wash racks, filtration system and fresh-water holding tank.

For more information contact Riveer Company at 888/857-7304 / circle no. 260

Big machine performance

Thomas Equipment's new T-245 HDK skid steer loader combines big machine strength and power. It has a 2,400-lb. lifting capacity and an 87-net-hp Kubota turbocharged diesel engine. Two 3-in. bucket cylinders are designed to provide high front-end strength and a breakout force of more than 6,970 lbs. Sound insulation keeps noise at less than 85 dBA inside the cab. "Quick-tach" attachment mounting makes utilizing a variety of Thomas attachments a snap.

For more information contact Thomas Equipment at 800/561-5623 / circle no. 261

Sawdust to sawdust



Whoever thought a chipper could be worldly? Well, that's exactly what Vermeer is saying its new BC1000 brush chipper is because it brings together the best European and American design features. It's more quiet, and, at 10x17 in. wide,

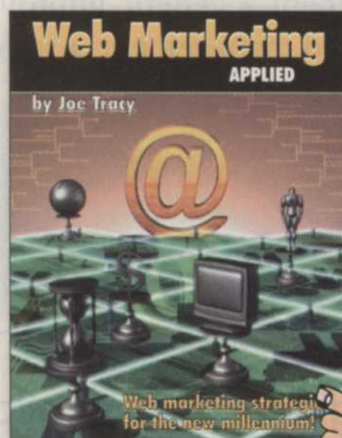
it has the largest feed opening in its class. Any debris up to 10 in. in diameter is at this chipper's mercy.

For more information contact Vermeer at 888/VERMEER or www.vermeer.com / circle no. 262

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- 28 30 Government Official - Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
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- 50 K Paving, Deck & Patio Installation
- 51 L Pond/Lake Care
- 52 M Landscape Installation
- 53 N Snow Removal
- 54 O Other (please specify) _____

4a. Do you specify, purchase or influence the selection of landscape products?

- 75 Yes 76 No

4b. If yes, check which products you buy or specify: (fill in ALL that apply)

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

5. Do you have Internet Access? 77 A Yes 78 B No

5a. If so, how often do you use it?

- 79 A Daily 80 B Weekly 81 C Monthly 82 D Occasionally

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

CONTRACTORS/SERVICE COMPANIES

- 02 255 Landscape Contractors (installation and maintenance)
- 03 260 Lawn Care Service Companies
- 04 265 Custom Chemical Applicators
- 05 270 Tree Service Companies/Arborists
- 06 275 Landscape Architects
- 07 280 Land Reclamation and Erosion Control
- 08 285 Irrigation Contractors
- Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) _____

INSTITUTIONAL FACILITIES

- 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 Condominiums/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 Groundscare (please specify) _____

SUPPLIERS AND CONSULTANTS

- 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. SERVICES PERFORMED (fill in ALL that apply)

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

4a. Do you specify, purchase or influence the selection of landscape products?

75 Yes 76 No

4b. If yes, check which products you buy or specify: (fill in ALL that apply)

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

5. Do you have Internet Access? 77 A Yes 78 B No

5a. If so, how often do you use it?

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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
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111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
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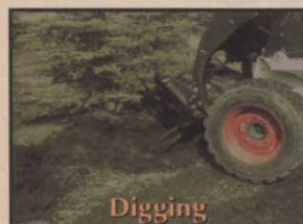
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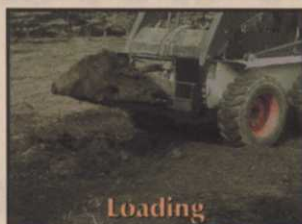
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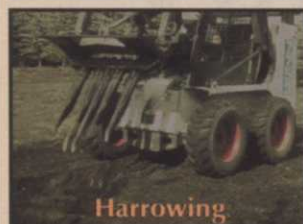
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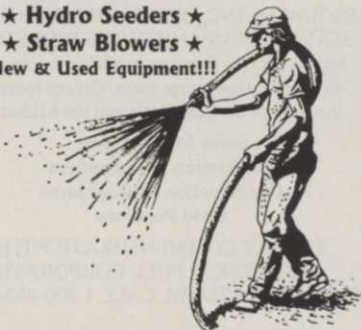


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cleanup crew

THIS AND THAT

It pays to be lightning fast

BY JASON STAHL



One afternoon, just before lunchtime, my crew members around me suddenly dropped their tools and raced wildly for the maintenance vehicles. Standing there

dumbfounded, I watched as some piled into the Cushman, others into the dump truck. The only vehicle that remained empty was an ugly ol' orange thing we called the "UV," short for utility vehicle.

Forty minutes later, when I finally arrived back at the shed for lunch, I realized why no one had wanted to drive the UV. It stood no chance in a race versus one of those kiddie cars at the carnival. It made crossing busy Lake Road like a game of Frogger, except this frog had two broken legs. Only one other time did I get stuck driving the UV that summer — I got hip-checked at the last minute by a kid twice my size. Soaking wet from a rain storm (the UV not only was slow but had no top), I arrived back at the shed only to see my fellow workers doubled over from laughter...*(Watch for my next installment coming soon)*

Do you have any horror stories about your job? If so, contact Jason Stahl at 440/891-2623 or e-mail at jstahl@advanstar.com



The remarkable Mr. Hinton

The labor shortage being what it is, it's a pleasure meeting somebody like James Hinton, center. Hinton worked for the grounds department of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro for 31 years, retiring 12 years ago. But retirement wasn't his style, so Hinton returned to the grounds department last year. Sports turf manager Peter Ashe, left, and physical plant supervisor Chris Fay, right, say that Hinton, 77, is an excellent employee. On most days he operates a larger riding mower on campus.

WOOD WOULD BE GOOD

Sure, you know your plants but do you know which woods work best for various hard-scape projects? According to the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, these woods work best:

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Siding	Western red cedar, cypress, redwood
Shingles	Cedar, cypress, redwood
Fence posts	Black locust, Osage orange, white oak, cedar, cypress, redwood, catalpa, chestnut
Gates & fences	Douglas fir, western larch, southern yellow pine, redwood, white oak
Decking, outdoor steps, porches	White oak, locust, redwood

Elvis was alive and well at a Las Vegas reception that was part of the recent ALCA Executive Forum. Landscape Management executive editor Sue Gibson (center) and Stano Landscaping's Mitch Rolsky (right) pose with two Las Vegas locals and their favorite Elvis impersonator/landscape contractor, otherwise known as Chris Kujawa of Kujawa Enterprises, Milwaukee (left center). Gibson noted Kujawa's Elvis was "surprisingly good, in a town full of Elvis wannabes."





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