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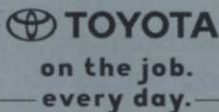
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BY SUE GIBSON / EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Is loyalty dead?

I hate quick cuts in music videos, as well as the daily barrage of information that forces us to react, rather than reflect. It makes us want everything now, every answer immediately, every issue resolved on the spot.

It wasn't too long ago that a movie camera lingered on a shot, we had time for hand-written letters and we understood that things take time to evolve. You can almost forget that attitude in today's business environment.

In my first job at a privately owned publishing firm, it was not unusual for an employee to celebrate 30, even 50 years there. Imagine that. Several people spent their entire careers at this firm — from youth to retirement. Loyalty like that is almost inconceivable now.

We live in a race car society and the folks you want to employ are already too comfortable with change. The last 20 years have brought a dramatic reshaping of the business landscape from the one that our parents and grandparents knew.

Free agent market

A recent *Wall Street Journal* interview with David Birch, a futurist and business growth expert, presented the idea that loyalty is not only dead, it's so dead that managers and owners like you shouldn't expect employees to stay very long. This will force managers to break work up into easily managed, easily trained steps, says Birch, much like Henry Ford's production line. Each assignment, he says, will be simplified to the point that an employee can come in and learn it with a minimum of time and effort.

Birch calls today's new job seekers "free agents" who prefer income gains to retirement perks, who hop from job to job and who see themselves as entirely responsible for their livelihood (quite the opposite from those lifers who let the organization guide their careers).

But what about loyalty? Family-run firms? Teamwork? How can you encourage a feeling of "family" and build a well-run team with workers who are itchy to move on? That's the million-dollar question.

We sure don't know all the answers but we've started the discussion in this month's coverage of "The Labor Crunch: Keep Employees Happy" (pages 36 through 66). There are many theories that probably work, but I'm betting on the one that says it's the organization itself that keeps people loyal. Sure, good wages and perks do wonders, as do interesting work, challenge, rewards and recognition. But the element that binds these together is a strong, people-centered organization.

Do you have a system that works? Are there steps you've taken that you'd like to share with your peers? If you'd like to talk about it, please call me at 800/225-4569 or send me an email at: sgibson@advanstar.com.

"We live in a race car society and the folks you want to employ are already too comfortable with change." — SG





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WHAT, WHEN & WHERE

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14-15 Beyond the Basics of Landscape Construction /

New Brunswick, NJ; Cook College Office of Continuing Professional Education; 732/932/9271

15 Successful Insect Identification and Control for Ornamental Plants /

New Brunswick, NJ; Cook College Office of Continuing Professional Education; 732/932/9271

15-20 National Arborist Association Winter Management Meeting /

Bermuda; 603/673-3311

16 Hazardous Tree Identification /

New Brunswick, NJ; Cook College Office of Continuing Professional Education; 732/932/9271

23 Overseed Field Day /

Gainesville, FL; 352/392-7939

23 Nevada Landscape Association Trade Show and Conference /

Las Vegas, NV; 775/673-0404

24 New York State Western Regional Turfgrass Conference /

Buffalo, NY; 518/783-1229

24-26 Capital District Garden and Flower Show /

Troy, NY; 518/356-6410

27-30 Commercial Pruning Schools /

Lake, Cuyahoga and

Lorain counties, OH; Ohio State University Extension; 440/322-0127

April

5 New York State Turfgrass Association Adirondack Regional Conference /

Lake Placid, NY; 800/873-8873

9-12 North American Snow Conference /

Traverse City, MI; Sponsored by the American Public Works Association; 816/472-6100

May

9-11 Using Conservation Buffers in Urbanizing Landscapes National Conference /

Nebraska City, NE; Sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation; 402/474-5655

17-18 Tree and Shrub Fertilizer Conference /

Akron, OH; Hosted by the Ohio Chapter of The International Society of Arboriculture; 440/632-5299

18 Recycled Water for Turf and Landscape Irrigation /

Davis, CA; Sponsored by the University of California; 800/752-0881

June

15-16 Warm Season Turfgrass Research Tour /

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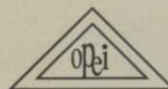
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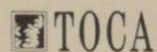
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Some of the technicians we unleash on our customers' properties are knowledgeable. The sad truth is that many aren't. Lack of employee training is the biggest failing in our industry. It costs everybody —

customers, employees, industry image. But, most of all, it costs lawn care company owners.

That's why when Phil Fogarty approached LM this past winter and asked if we would like to

partner with consulting company JP Horizons Inc. in offering its "Skills Development Series," we jumped at it. Fogarty is associated with JP Horizons, the 11-year-old consulting/training company founded by Jim Paluch. Their new program challenges lawn care companies to provide 52 weeks of training.

This is not sit-in-front-of-a-video training on a rainy day. This is interactive instruction (in 1/2 hour increments, the same morning each week) that you monitor and test to see how well you're doing. But Fogarty's making it more than that. The Skills Development Series is also a contest which allows participating companies to measure their training efforts against other companies.

We at LM and the folks at American Cyanamid, sponsors of the Skills Development Series, realize that the lawn care industry can reach the next level of service and public acceptance only by committing itself to more consistent and effective training. Representatives from both our magazine and from Cyanamid were on hand in Tampa, FL, when Fogarty wrapped up PLCAA's 2000 Management Conference with the Skills Development Series — an afternoon-long "Training Jam Session."

Representatives from about 25 lawn care companies attended the jam session and several embraced the program and set aside time for training each week, including their busiest time which is now. Good for them. Fogarty followed up with a second jam session in Cincinnati a week later, again enlisting LCOs committed to training.

We at LM believe it's high time the industry turned up the heat on training and we feel that Fogarty can supply the spark.



Top, from left, Steve Bailey, Cullen Walker, and Richard Bare. Above, Louis Kobus, Jr., outlines topics for a January training session. Left, Phil Fogarty fires up the group.

Lack of training is the biggest failing in our industry
—Phil Fogarty



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BY JERRY GAETA / GUEST COLUMNIST

"Perhaps you're concerned about losing employees if you discipline them. I call this being held hostage." JG



Discipline isn't easy

Discipline is a source of distress for many companies and is often due to unwritten or unclear policies. If employees know what is expected of them at the time of hiring, many discipline problems could be avoided. A detailed company manual should list what is expected of the employee and, in turn, what he or she can expect of the employer. It establishes rules and guidelines and the consequences if they are not followed. When you remove possible gray areas and provide consistency, it will make your managers' and foremen's jobs easier.

Establish a company chain of command to direct attention to the proper person who is responsible. The manual should be written so that your employees understand it.

Handling discipline problems

You must document improper discipline because lack of documentation is a major cause of employee grievances. Document verbal warnings — this will protect

you and show you take these matters seriously.

Perhaps you're concerned about losing employees if you discipline them. I call this being held hostage. In this tight labor market, that's not a valid argument. Think about the message you're sending the other employees. Also, think what affect this has on the people following the rules — you are diminishing their morale. You're better off without the offender.

When confronted with a discipline problem, always ask yourself, "How would I like to be treated if I was being disciplined?" This philosophy will make the situation easier to deal with. Think before you act and, if unsure of what to do, discuss the situation with someone else, but do not allow too much time to elapse in your decision-making process.

If you have reoccurring problems such as absenteeism and tardiness, try a reward system. This can be as simple as a weekly pay incentive for perfect attendance. Positive reinforcement may achieve the required results quicker and easier than negative reactions.

Make sure the right person handles the discipline and be careful not to overstep your foreman, for instance, if a laborer needs to be disciplined. You don't want to reduce the foreman's authority in the eyes of those in his charge.

You may want to provide training in human relations skills for your managers; it may solve future problems.

There is no magic formula in dealing with these problems; a basic system needs to be in place, as well as good ol' common sense. (See sample performance appraisal sheet on p. 23).

—The author is a green industry consultant and partner with The Good Earth Inc., Mt. Pleasant, SC. He can be reached at 843/884-6114.

Jerry's corrective steps

1. Verbal counseling — refer to rule or regulation, note date of incident, summarize the incident, get response from employee.
2. Written warning — refer to rule or regulation with date, summarize and get employee response, both parties sign. Check if employee accepts this scenario.
3. Second warning (written) or work suspension notice — detail incident (rule, date, summary), list suspension dates, both parties sign, check if employee accepts.
4. Employee termination — record summarizes incidents and rules/regulations, employee response, both parties sign, check if employee accepts.



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General Factors

Quality — accuracy, thoroughness and acceptability of work performed

Productivity — quality and efficiency of work produced in a specified period of time.

Job knowledge — practical/technical skills and information used on the job

Paperwork — proper timeliness, accuracy and legibility. Includes time etiquette.

Reliability — the extent to which a task employee can be relied upon regarding completion and followup.

Independence — the extent of work performed with little or no supervision.

Availability — the extent to which an employee is punctual, plus his/her overall attendance record. Includes overtime and/or weekend work.

Equipment — care, proper use, upkeep, service, safety, and appearance of equipment this employee uses.

Safety — the extent to which the employee adheres to company safety policies and is safety-conscious (i.e., wearing safety equipment, following designated procedures).

Adherence to policy — the extent to which an employee adheres to company policy, conducts him or herself, follows rules, and observes good housekeeping practices.

Customer service — willingness and demonstrated ability to cooperate, work, and communicate with co-workers, supervisors, subordinates, outside contacts, and customers. Includes the stability, courtesy, personal appearance and judgment demonstrated on the job.

Total point score (1 - 100) _____

Discussed with individual on _____

Employee's signature _____

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Evaluator's signature _____ Date _____

Evaluator's supervisor's signature _____ Date _____

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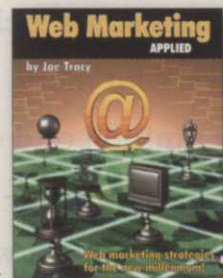
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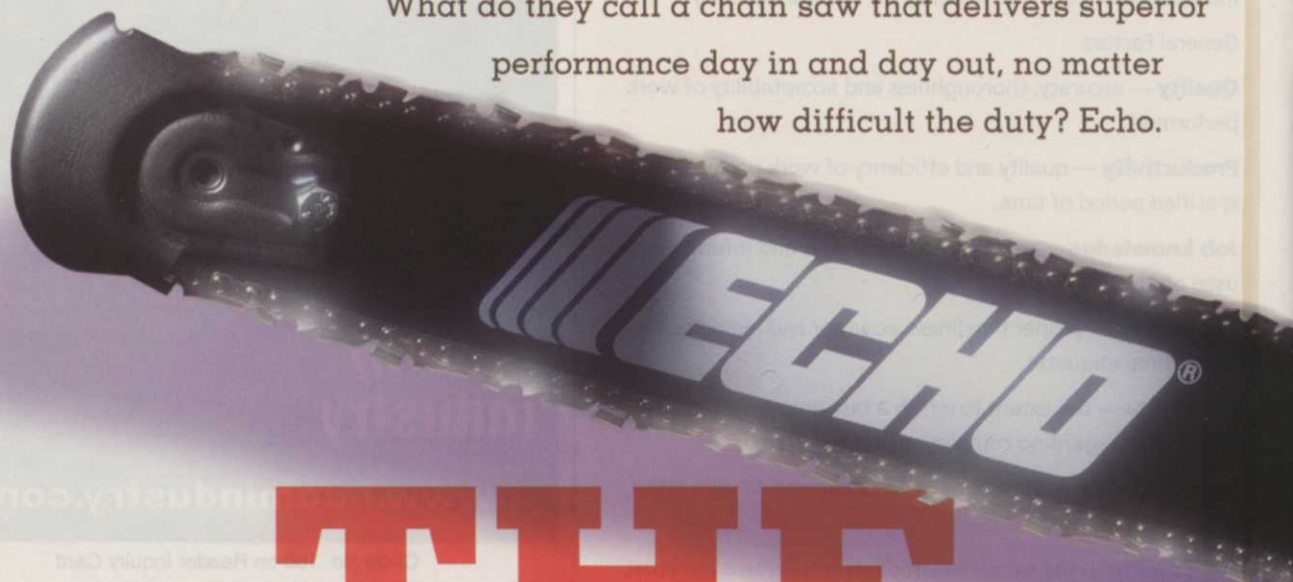
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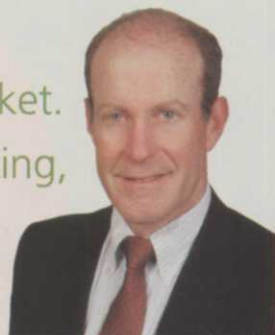
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BY ROBERT K. BAIRD / GUEST COLUMNIST

"There is no such thing as a 'sure thing' in the market. So if you are set on doing your own investing, realize there will be ups and downs." — RB



Counter uncertainty with a sound investment plan

"Man is extremely uncomfortable with uncertainty. To deal with his discomfort, man tends to create a false sense of security by substituting certainty for uncertainty. It becomes the herd instinct." — Bennet W. Goodspeed, The Tao Jones Averages

I learned about this first hand over 20 years ago when I began trading a commodity system I helped to develop. In two years, the system had huge returns. Unfortunately, by the end of those two years, every client had quit because there was too much uncertainty.

Uncertainty wreaks havoc with many investors' fortunes in the stock market. It's an unfortunate aspect of human nature that when left to our own devices, we tend to sell at the lows (panic) and buy at the highs (euphoria). This is why I stressed having a portion of one's investments managed for you in Part I.

Get a real plan

Professionals have a plan and exercise it. Most investors don't.

There is no such thing as a "sure thing" in the market. So if you are set on doing your own investing, realize there will be ups and downs. Though we have been in a long-term bull market since the 18th century, there were hiccups along the way.

What often causes investment failure is timing and our insistence on "being right." We sometimes have love affairs with equities. I have seen enough promising companies go the way of the buggy whip, however, to know that the most important thing is know-

ing when to sell. Most of us never do, which is why most of us must put our money in a mechanical program that is diversified, disciplined and deliberate.

I have three programs that fit this bill and they have all beaten the pants off most mutual funds for the past 13 years. Does this mean that if you try them, you, too, will beat the market? Hardly. It doesn't even mean you will make money over the next few years, no matter what program or stocks you choose. But you do put the odds in your favor.

The "Dogs of the Dow"

The first of these is called the "Dogs of the Dow." You take the 10 highest dividend stocks in the Dow, then pick the four lowest priced stocks and choose either stocks #1 to #4 or #2 to #5 and buy an equal amount of each of them. You don't buy the #1 stock if it is also the highest dividend. After one year, you switch out of the stocks you have owned that are no longer "dogs" and buy the new ones that are. Then wait another year and do it again. With this program, you are basically betting that GM or Dupont aren't going out of business in the next year. The "Motley Fool" Web site (<http://www.fool.com>) has the results of over 30 years of historical testing. This value and dividend-oriented approach has averaged about 20% per year with only three losing years.

Two other approaches are called "Spark 5" and "PEG 5." The companies on these programs have earnings acceleration, price momentum and estimates of

continued on page 28

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continued from page 26

future increased growth. This means the street has recognized that these are up-and-coming companies who (hopefully) will

continue their current pattern of rapid price appreciation. The returns can be greater than the Dow dog approach, but there is also more volatility. Like with the Dow ap-

proach, at the end of one year for "Spark 5" picks and every six months for "PEG 5" picks, you exit those no longer on those lists and exchange them with new ones.

If none of this strikes your fancy, stick with companies you are familiar with and figure out your selling strategy. Some people like to set a price point below which they don't want to see the stock trade. If it does go lower than that, they sell. Others prefer to set a fundamental exit point. An example of this is when someone gives you one of those world famous "hot tips." You

The most important thing is knowing when to sell. Most of us never do, which is why we opt for a diversified program.

have been informed that the company has just been given a license to steal and an announcement is imminent...and nothing happens. Just remember the old adage about cutting your losses short.

A good mix for most investors' portfolios would include:

1. Professional management
2. Mechanical approaches
3. Your own thing

If it sounds like I'm overly cautious, it is because after so many years of stellar returns, it is sometimes easy to lose sight of things like bear markets. There is no excuse to invest without being informed and prepared.

— The author is a registered principal/independent stock and commodity broker with more than 20 years experience in the financial industry. Contact him at 800/643-1155.



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industry almanac

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Sanitors buys Russ Fragala Landscape

SAN ANTONIO, TX - Sanitors, Inc., San Antonio, TX, acquired Russ Fragala Landscape Contracting Corp., Long Island, NY. Fragala will stay on to oversee operations and assist mergers and acquisitions throughout the Long Island area.

"It's an exciting time right now," Fragala said. "Now we're going to grow this region tremendously through internal growth and acquisition."

Sanitors closed out 1999 with over \$100 million in sales.

TruGreen-LandCare acquires Scapes

ASHTON, MD - TruGreen-LandCare acquired Scapes Inc., Marietta, GA. Terms of the sale include all commercial landscape management operations, residential and commercial design/build operations, all trucks and equipment, and the transfer of 100 employees.

Environmental Industries buys STM Landscape

CALABASAS, CA - Industry giant Environmental Industries has acquired STM Landscape Services, a \$12 million landscape maintenance company based in Oakton, VA.

STM will operate under EII's landscape maintenance division, Environmental Care.

With the acquisition of STM, EII projects annual revenues in excess of \$500 million a year.

Andersons, Nu-Gro buy Scotts' U.S. and Canadian turf business

COLUMBUS, OH — In a move designed to allow it to concentrate on the consumer end of its operation, The Scotts Company sold its U.S. Professional Turf business to The Andersons and its Canadian Professional Turf business to Nu-Gro Corp.

The acquisition includes ProTurf®, Contec™ and other brand names, the distribution network, customer lists and all trademarks and copyrights associated with the professional turf market. It does not include use of the Scotts brand name or any of Scotts' consumer or professional grass seed or professional horticultural business.

Scott Todd, senior vice president for Scotts' Professional Business Group, said the sale was the result of three things:

- limited industry structure
- limited resources
- inadequate distribution strategy

"More and more golf courses are being built, so budgets are getting tighter and their ability to buy products is becoming constrained," Todd said. "Things are also constrained at the supplier level, where golf course buying groups are placing emphasis on profit margins.

"Also, we have limited resources here at Scotts," Todd added. "As demand for our consumer products grew, our golf business suffered. And last year, we switched to a distribution strategy and weren't covering the market as well as we should have. We could have solved that problem, but considering all three of these factors, it made for a difficult profit picture."

Retaining the professional horticulture and grass seed segments of its Professional Business Group is key to Scotts' biotechnology efforts of value-added seeds and plants.

For The Andersons, the acquisition puts

the firm one step closer to becoming the leader in golf course and other professional turf products in the U.S. "It complements the recent expansion of our production facilities to include a presence in the eastern and southern portions of the U.S.," says Rick Anderson, president of The Andersons. "In addition, we continue to seek an additional production site in the west and remain open to additional acquisition opportunities."

John Hill, president of Nu-Gro, said the move also supports his company's goals. "This acquisition is consistent with our stated strategy of consolidating the Canadian fertilizer market," Hill said.

LESCO realigns with eye toward future

CLEVELAND, OH - As a long-term planning strategy, LESCO has realigned its business into three separate divisions — Lawn Care, Golf and Product Supply.

The move was designed to:

- support the company's long-term growth;
- support the company's profitability strategy;
- increase the company's focus on growing shareholder value

William Foley, chairman, president and CEO, said that the reorganization will focus LESCO even more on customers and markets and was not merely done with an eye on future profit. "Focusing separate management teams on each of our business units will increase the accountability for the performance of our business and improve our response time to customers."

CLIPPINGS

Info Center

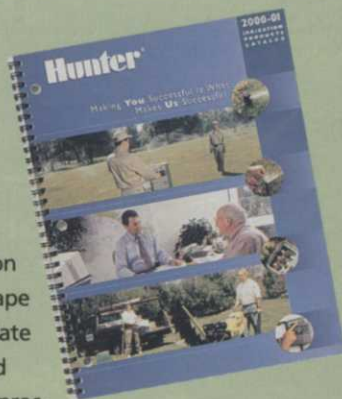
VIDEOS AND LITERATURE FOR THE GREEN INDUSTRY

THE PLCAA 2000 PRODUCTS CATALOG... is now available. The revised catalog features new items such as a video entitled "Job Safety for the Professional Landscape Employee" and a book called "Fundamentals of Turfgrass Management." Described as a one-stop information source, the catalog serves up a mix of educational tools on lawn and landscape management, marketing and management, and customer awareness. For a free copy of the catalog call 800/458-3466.

YOU MIGHT SEE THE LIGHT...if you check out Kichler® Landscape Lighting's new product manual, a snazzy 71-page work of art chock full of crystal clear product photos. Turn your customers onto this kind of landscape lighting or other information. If interested in obtaining the manual, call Kichler at 216-573-6787.

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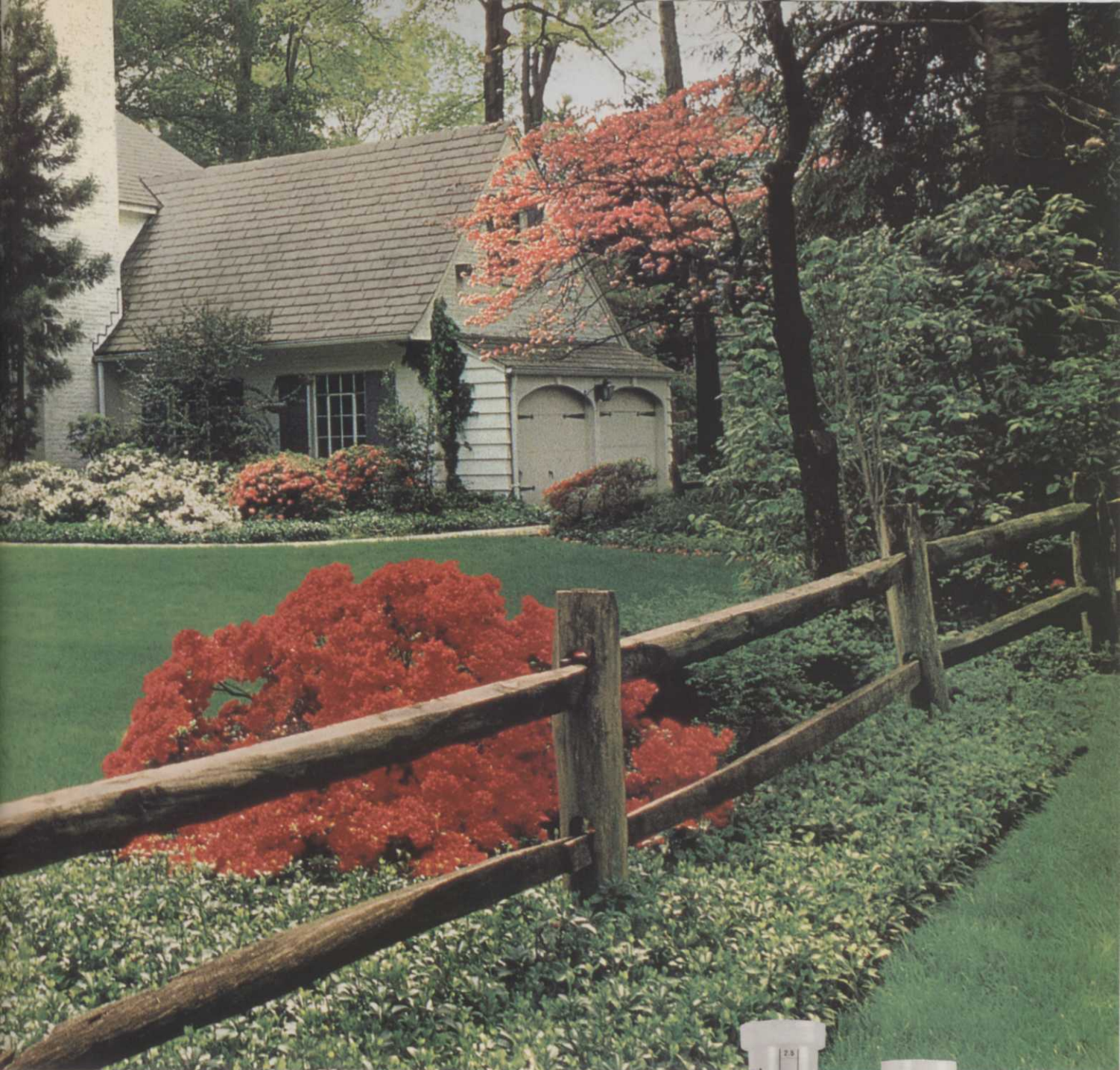
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the plant surface due to its high affinity with the surface. Forming a protective reservoir of fungicide on the plant surface, it resists washing off, thus ensuring long-lasting disease control.

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Simplicity creates e-commerce network

PORT WASHINGTON, WI — Simplicity Manufacturing took one more step into the e-commerce world by allowing dealers instant access to parts availability and order status through the TradeRoute® system.

In addition to checking parts availability and order status, dealers can place orders, submit product registrations, submit warranty claims and ask about warranty status. The TradeRoute system has an immediate response capability enabling dealers to make an inquiry and get a response all in the same electronic transmission.

By linking the TradeRoute system to its existing electronic parts catalog, PartSmart, Simplicity has formed a complete business-to-business e-commerce network for its dealers.

"We've been using ARI's PartSmart electronic parts catalog software for nearly four years with great success," says Jim Wier, president of Simplicity. "Combining TradeRoute software with our PartSmart catalog gives our dealers a state-of-the-art e-commerce system that will meet their needs today and in the future."

Correction

In the January issue of LM, we reported that Rex Dixon was promoted to director of sales and marketing for The Toro Company's Irritrol Systems. Actually, Dixon is now director of sales and marketing for Weathermatic. Our apologies.

Surfin' Turf

Morton Arboretum Plant Collections Catalog

<http://www.mortonarb.org>

g

The Morton Arboretum has done a tree-mendous job of providing Web junkies with information about the 41,000 plants on Arboretum grounds by creating an electronic version of its Plant Collections Catalog. Horticultural profes-

sionals can now learn more about one of the nation's premiere, private botanical institutions at the click of a mouse button.

Catalog entries include each plant's scientific and trade name, location on Arboretum grounds, geographical range and hardiness. Information detailing when, from where, and by whom a specimen was added to the collections is also listed.

LCOs focus on clients, the Internet at PLCAA meeting

TAMPA, FL — Before you go out chasing new customers, take a hard look at your current ones. If they're good and you can service them profitably, make sure you protect them.

In other words, it's often simpler and more cost effective to retain customers than to find new ones. That's why Dale Amstutz, Northern Lawns, Omaha, NB, says he directs about 60% of his company's marketing budget at his current customers.

These and other nuggets of knowledge were shared at the PLCAA's Winter Management Conference this past February.

Hot topics at this most recent conference included: the Internet's impact on the Green Industry, the purpose and importance of strategic planning and, of course, acquiring and retaining profitable customers.

Louis Kobus, Jr., Village Turf, Mt. Vernon, VA, says his best customers are the ones that have been with his firm the longest.

He looks at what he calls the "CLV" factor, the Customer Lifetime Value. It's a simple formula. Take the annual revenue the customer provides and multiply it by the number of years that customer has been with your firm.



Keynote speaker "Mr. Per," left, with LCO Vincent Tummino

throughout the U.S. Arboretum catalog users can copy, cut and paste database information using the Web browser.

"The catalog is unusual in its breadth of information," says Ed Hedborn, Arboretum plant records manager. "While some botanic gardens have the names and grounds locations of their plants on list, none, to the best of our knowledge, make readily available the depth of information that the Arboretum provides."

The catalog links to the U.S. Department of Agriculture hardiness map that gives a complete picture of climatological zones

People & companies



Nissan Diesel America named Masaru Kobori executive vice president of administration.

Dow Chemical named Elin Miller to lead the Global Urban Pest Business Unit for Dow AgroSciences (DAS). In her new position, Miller will also serve as the leader of the Pacific Trade Area for DAS and will be a member of the Dow AgroSciences Corporate Management Committee.

Boynton Pump and Supply, an irrigation equipment manufacturer, was named the 1999 Distributor of the Year by Hunter Industries. Featured below are owners (from left) Tim, Hal and Jon Kilpatrick.



Mitsubishi Fuso Truck of America promoted John

Mackey to director of fleet sales.

CNH, formed recently by the merger of Case Corporation and New Holland, named Steven Lamb president and chief operating officer and Ted French president of financial services and chief financial officer.

Rain Bird gave Gabriel and Dolores Moriel and Paul and Darlene Hunn of Imperial Sprinkler and Imperial Irrigation its National Distributor of the Year award. The award is given

to one out of 753 distributors. Ed Hawkins of Imperial Irrigation Supply received Rain Bird's National Salesman of the Year award.

DTN Weather Safety Center added a free online connection for remote or emergency access to weather information. This service adds to the company's stand-alone satellite system.

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where they're bitin'

How one manager found all the 'good' people he needed to succeed in the lawn service business

BY BILL HOOPES

In my management training experience, the single most surprising discovery I've made and confirmed many times is that managers simply will not recruit. Not can't recruit — won't recruit.

My earlier article (*LM* September 1999) emphasized seven keys to management success. Number 6 involved the need for a human resources strategy — a plan for finding, hiring and keeping people. This article expands upon that and offers a plan that every manager can use to find, then hire, the people you want.

He's really you

You need to know that Max Terrier is real. He is a successful lawn service manager whose real identity I'm protecting because that's the way he wanted it.

Max became a "superstar" while managing a lawn service branch in south Texas. He boasted no business degree, only some prior experience working in the fast food

ILLUSTRATION: BOB LYNCH



business. And Max wasn't particularly lucky. He learned the most effective process for hiring and managing people by trial and error.

He did possess some important traits that I refer to as the "Terrier Factor." Max had the ability to do two things that helped him succeed:

* He learned to focus on a *well defined objective*.

* He played the business game with *dogged determination and discipline*.

Together, that simply means he focused his energy on the most important targets and believed in himself to the point that he was able to ride out temporary setbacks and keep working.

Just an average manager

At first, Max was like many managers — consumed by lots of little fires and working endless hours to keep up. To Max, the 'recruiting plan' amounted to a message to the office manager, telling her to "run the ad again, Sheila." And it never seemed to work. But Max, like lots of us, ran the ad anyway. After all, you have to get the word out; you have to 'fill those chairs.'

Without going into the oft-repeated details of our shrinking labor pool, let's review the lessons Max learned.

After hours of planning and thinking about how he would pull off a successful season, Max went about his hiring as always — tapping the labor pool he could easily reach in the classifieds. He was like the rest, returning to the local classifieds again and again when time was short and creative thinking absent. On the spring that changed him forever, he came up short, hiring five of the seven people he needed. Still, he plunged into spring, sure he'd find a couple of guys somewhere.

On one particularly bad weather week

in March, two technicians walked just when he needed them most. And, as you already know, he was unable to replace them. In four weeks, Max lost over \$30,000 in much needed revenue. But it wasn't just the revenue shortfall that stung; Max was behind during the most competitive time of the year. And with every passing day, more customers threatened cancellation if they didn't receive service.

He thought about the old lawn care adage: "When you blow it early, Round One never ends." Max did what he always did and reached for the Maalox.

Why did this happen again? Two management mistakes caused the problem:

1. Max made poor hiring selections. With less-than-adequate candidates to choose from, he settled for losers; and
2. Max didn't know how to replace those that left. Both problems are recruiting failures. Max knew he had to solve these problems, but he needed a plan.

The light bulb goes on

Sitting in his office one evening when he'd rather have been at home, Max picked up a copy of *Field & Stream* magazine. Flipping through the pages, he noticed an article titled, "Get Smart: Fish Where They're Bitin'." The article described a strategy fishermen use to quickly and consistently locate large schools of fish. It explained how successful fishermen bring in a great catch every time.

He thought about it all night. The next morning, when his office manager dutifully reported, "the ads are in," Max thought again about the article and knew his message (the bait) wasn't where it should be. It wasn't where they are biting.

In the next few days, while the phone remained silent, Max accepted that he

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Max's recruiting plan of action

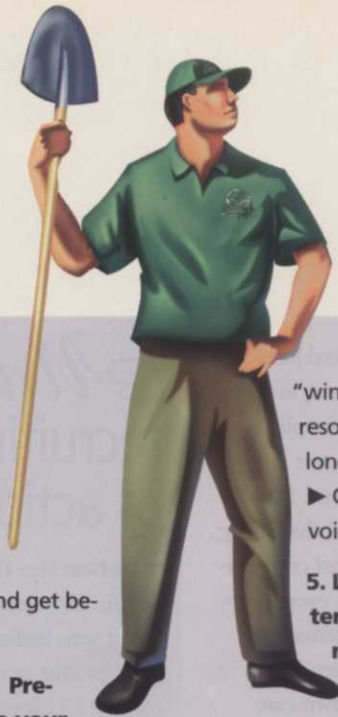
1. Define the fish you want to catch: Find people who believe what you believe. Max realized he had the best chance of succeeding if he could staff his company with people who were interested in his job vs. any job and felt comfortable with his philosophies, values and procedures. He had to consider them in terms of:

- ▶ **Experience** — what did he want new hires to know?
- ▶ **Skills** — what did he expect new hires to be able to do quickly?
- ▶ **Personal values/ethics/standards** — are they consistent with his?
- ▶ **Development potential** — how much growth did he expect?

2. Fish where they're bitin': Identify high potential recruiting sources for the kind of people you want to locate.

- ▶ Involve yourself in local community college/technical school projects or activities as a sponsor. Your marketplace needs to know you are alive.
- ▶ Visit local high school vo-ag or vo-tech classes and JVS programs. Get to know teachers and counselors. Communicate your need.
- ▶ Sponsor community environmental improvement projects for publicity. Word of your company will travel fast.
- ▶ Write to a list of certified applicators in your area (lists available from your state's department of agriculture).
- ▶ Check state and local extension ser-

continued on page 38



To Max, the 'recruiting plan' was a message to the office manager, telling her to 'run the ad again, Sheila.'

continued from page 37

vice training and re-training programs. Many are looking for placement destinations.

In other words, do what Max finally did and get beyond the classifieds!

3. Use the right bait: Prepare to communicate your message effectively:

- ▶ Develop catchy, easy-to-read recruiting literature. There are plenty around to use for ideas.
- ▶ Print up concise job description/career opportunity sheets for use in quick two-minute interviews (when you meet a potential candidate).
- ▶ Use business cards with a benefits-oriented recruiting message.
- ▶ Rewrite your hiring ads to emphasize a good work environment, controlled hours, vacations, benefits, recognition, team activity and fun — not just tasks. Your message must 'sell' your company.

4. Go fishin' in new waters: Get the word out:

- ▶ Try weekly tabloid papers vs. the daily publication.
- ▶ Move your newspaper ad out of the classifieds (try the sports section).
- ▶ Give your ad a new, interesting heading ("Tired of empty promises?" or "Want to know what you've been missing?").
- ▶ Advertise in community colleges, career centers and technical school papers.
- ▶ Try drive-time country radio (saturation 10-second spots for two weeks).
- ▶ Offer a finder bonus to current staff

"winners." Referrals are a great resource and they stay with you longer.

- ▶ Canvass customers with in-voice stuffers.

5. Learn to set the hook: Interview effectively and make better selections.

- ▶ Confirm you have a positive "drive-up" first impression. Don't let them drive away — it happens.
- ▶ Confirm your staff is acting and looking professional. Candidates believe what they see is what you are.
- ▶ Let your staff know when interviews are scheduled.
- ▶ Provide a friendly welcome.
- ▶ Be ready for a private, uninterrupted interview. Clear your desk.
- ▶ Rehearse the interview; don't 'wing it.'
- ▶ Opening — explain the job, requirements, rewards. Confirm understanding (5 minutes).
- ▶ Probe with careful, open-ended questions (10 minutes).
- ▶ If you like what you see and hear, make a hire/no hire decision without wasting more management time.
- ▶ If positive, answer candidate questions (10 minutes).
- ▶ End the interview with a challenge: "If I put you on my team, will you give me your personal commitment to stick with us for at least six months? It will take me that long to really teach you the position."
- ▶ If you get a 'yes,' ask the candidate to go home, think about it and call you at 8:00 a.m. sharp! Some do, some don't. Those that don't, you don't want.

continued from page 37

would need to learn how to go fishing again. He knew he had bait, but perhaps not the right kind for the fish he needed to attract. And just maybe Max was fishing in the wrong part of the lake.

A new day, a new fishin' hole

These are the steps Max Terrier took to rework his recruiting/hiring strategy:

1. Reset management priorities. Max understood that he, and only he, could be the fisherman. The process could not be delegated to his assistant and it would not happen without him. Max had to make time to 'go fishin'.' This meant he had to reorder his time use priorities.

2. One hour per day. He set aside a minimum of one hour each day for recruiting. No matter what, Max worked on recruiting for an hour, in addition to paying regular recruiting visits to career days and local events where prospects might be found. He decided the best hour for him was immediately after the crews went out in the field in the morning. That became the time he took no calls or interruptions, and he devoted himself to building his company team.

Max worked through a process of evaluating the recruiting possibilities in his town. He made contacts, learned how to get visibility, where to be and when to be there. All this took Max one hour a day, which is not unreasonable when you consider that the goal is to find and attract the most important management resource of all — employees to strengthen your firm.

3. Commitment to his plan. Max made huge progress when, after a lot of thought, he decided to accept the level of personal discipline required to make the process work. For him, a psychological tool he'd

continued on page 41

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continued from page 38

read about called "auto suggestion" made it easy. He made up two posters on which he wrote these slogans: "People first, everything else second," and "I'll spend 1 hour each day recruiting."

Max placed the posters on the wall where they would be impossible for him to avoid: directly across from his desk.

4. Program yourself to make it happen.

It may sound simplistic, even naive, but this process of recommitment to a new approach worked for Max as it will work for you. Once you *think* something is a good idea and make a mental/emotional commitment to making that thought a part of

your life, you begin to *program your subconscious mind to make it happen*. Max used this technique to make the necessary changes in his thinking and routine and he succeeded in developing, and implementing, a much improved recruiting strategy.

It all began for Max when he decided to reset his priorities: Put people first. Then, he acknowledged that more time should be devoted to staffing, including a long-term commitment to the process.

You need people to make a team

The sidebar beginning on page 37 presents Max's five key steps to improving recruiting effectiveness. In the process, Max

learned that people take lots of time, but people are also your most precious resource. No manager can succeed on individual effort alone. Like Max Terrier, you need a motivated staff. And the sooner you accept the need to place the highest priority possible on recruiting, the sooner your staffing problems will go away.

Max Terrier learned you never stop recruiting! **LM**

The author is director of training and development at Scotts Lawn Service in Marysville, OH. He says Max Terrier is a composite of two real people who worked for him in Texas.

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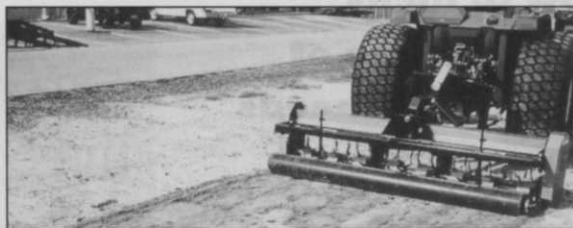
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How to supervise 'special' people

When you hire young employees, older workers and the frequently unemployed, you have special management challenges. Learn how to focus on each type of employee's needs

BY DONALD W. JACKSON

Hiring and retaining employees can be challenging at best. We all want knowledgeable and dependable workers, but most landscape organizations are only as solid as their weakest employee. Since our industry is largely seasonal and dependent on staffing through fairly low-paying, manual labor positions, it is critical to make hiring the best possible employee a top priority.

These 'special' employee types can be suitable and productive candidates with the proper supervision.

Hiring the frequently unemployed

Many seasonal and entry level positions are filled by individuals with less than perfect work histories. Either they have had significant periods of unemployment or are transient and continually move from job to job.

Also, they may not have graduated from high school or earned a GED equivalency degree.

Those who are frequently unemployed may have family responsibilities that can

be financially and emotionally demanding, and their sketchy work histories can sometimes be traced to having had little guidance to prepare them for workplace responsibilities.

Often, they are inexperienced in functioning within a structured work environment and may not have developed social skills involving relationships with coworkers and supervisors or adhering to workplace rules.

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Hiring: Three faces with special needs

EMPLOYEE PROFILE # 1

Frequently unemployed

Robert Mills

Age: 34

Height: 5'9"

Weight: 175 lbs.

Marital Status: 4 children: ages 5, 6, 11 and 15

Education: GED equivalency degree

▶ Robert has had four jobs in the last five years, with frequent periods of unemployment over the last 15 years. These lapses

often last between six and nine months.

▶ Robert does not have any criminal record and has no history of alcohol or drug abuse.

▶ He has worked primarily as a diesel engine mechanic, heavy equipment operator and as a laborer in landscape and nursery operations.

▶ Robert is known to have a hot temper, which has caused him to be somewhat difficult to supervise over long periods of time.



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Training ideas

Remember the letters "SSR" when you train frequently unemployed individuals. It is important that all training be simple (S), specific (S) and as relevant or "real life" (R) as possible. Also remember that visual aids help a person understand the concepts you're teaching.

Be thorough in all training and encourage personal interaction to assure they understand the topics you cover. Reinforce key points when on the job. Encourage and reinforce positive behavior and accomplishments.

Finally, try to establish and promote cooperation between current, trusted employees and newly hired seasonals or entry-level people.

He's just a kid!

High school and college age students offer our industry another source of labor, and although many are ambitious and genuinely looking to succeed, their goals are often short term and usually measured in weeks or months rather than years. The quality of a young person's home life,

along with the level of guidance from other adults, can vary widely along with their maturity.

There are obvious exceptions, but the overall affluence and level of disposable income among this age group is relatively high compared to previous generations. As a result, in a period of a strong national economy like the present, it's the employees who end up vying for people in this age group.

A positive work environment means more than a competitive wage at this age. This may mean better working conditions and flexible work hours. It is important to be adaptable and timely in making changes. The computer age has forced technology changes to move at a very high rate of speed. Capable and intelligent young employees seldom have much patience waiting for improvements their supervisors promise.

Younger employees often need to feel a sense of purpose from their jobs. Completing a task simply because their supervisor instructs them to do so may not be sufficient for a stimulated and forward-thinking student. Try to communicate the intention

and rationale of each job assignment to the best of your ability.

Finally, be realistic in your expectations and objectives. We are sometimes quick to fall back upon the "when I was their age ..." philosophy in evaluating the productivity of younger employees.

Appreciating older employees

Many industry organizations rely heavily on older employees. That's because they may be critical to the operation's success, as well as an important influence on the dependability and motivation of other employees.

Factors that wear on older employees relate to their physical and emotional well-being. Influences such as heredity, living conditions, diet and financial responsibilities can impact an older worker's health and productivity. Family-related stresses can include dependent children and grandchildren. As with any age group, the ability to cope with job-related and personal stress varies greatly from person to person.

Because the number of older employees in our industry continues to grow each year, more landscape managers are realizing how productive they can be:

- ▶ Job-related turnover is often much less with older employees compared to younger workers.

- ▶ Older employees are frequently more safety conscious, maintain a more consistent attendance record, and, due to their many years of experience, are often more skilled at their jobs.

- ▶ Older workers matched to the right job can be very productive. Tasks that require accuracy, judgment and dependability over swiftness are frequently better suited to them.

- ▶ These employees characteristically bring assets to the table that can be of great value to their immediate supervisors and the organization. Through experience, they have learned to see the "big picture" and

EMPLOYEE PROFILE #2

Young employee

Richard Thomas Jr.

Age: 19

Height: 6' 0"

Weight: 195 lbs.

Marital Status: Single

Education: High school graduate

- ▶ Richard took a year off to work after high school before attending college.

- ▶ He is an only child and was raised in a single-parent home. Both his mother and his high school guidance counselor advised Richard to work for a year to give him time to mature.



- ▶ Overall, Richard was a B+ to A- student in high school but was particularly gifted in the areas of English, speech and debate. He is entering Wake Forest University in the fall as a psychology major. Richard will most likely go on to law school.

- ▶ Richard has matured significantly as a result of job responsibilities and is currently employed as a summer crew leader with a landscape maintenance company in southeastern Connecticut.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE #3

Older employee

Samantha Hunt

Age: 59

Height: 5'6"

Weight: 145 lbs.

Marital Status:

Married with two

grown children

Education: Degree

in Business Man-

agement from The

Ohio State University



▶ Samantha was employed for more than 35 years with a large farm equipment manufacturer based in the Midwest. She was a regional sales manager with the company when she elected to retire early at age 57.

▶ She worked the next two years as a pickup and heavy truck salesman at a dealership just outside of Cincinnati before assuming her current position as commercial sales-customer service representative for a large midwestern nursery and landscape operation.

▶ Her extroverted personality, high standards and dedication to detail have allowed her to quickly excel in her current position in the landscape business.

are able to look at jobs with a more long-term, global perspective. This is especially important when the job requires contact with clients — older employees are frequently more attuned to the nuances and delicacies of good "people skills."

Make it legal

Good ethical, moral and legal standards are important to the longevity and overall success of any business, and such standards are no less important within our industry.

The selection, training and retention of

quality employees is important at all job levels. Unfortunately, too many employers subscribe to an open or "swinging door" philosophy when it comes to staffing.

It takes time and effort to develop quality employees at all levels and learn how to

manage them, but it's worth the effort. Try it. You will reap well-deserved benefits!

— The author directs the horticulture, landscaping and turf management program at The Williamson Free School, Media, PA.

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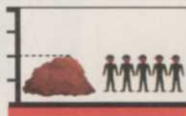
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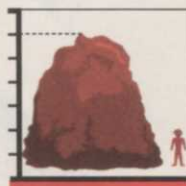
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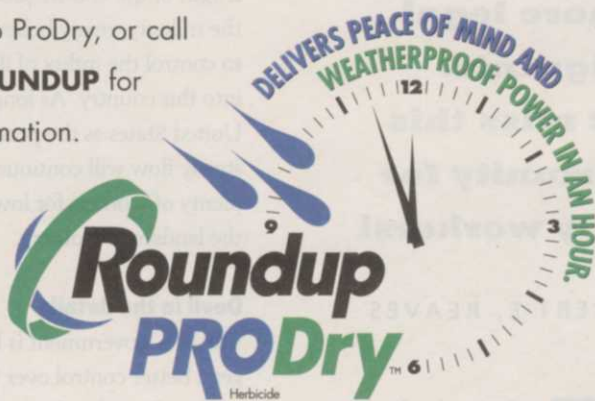
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H2B:

The legal alternative

Savvy contractors are already making this system work for them and there's room for more legal immigrants. Don't miss this opportunity for quality workers!

BY ROBERT E. REAVES

Ask most landscape managers to make one wish and, in most cases, they would wish for a reliable, skilled workforce made up of local citizens. That wish probably won't come true, since most Americans shun hard labor positions in the landscape industry. Illegal workers from Mexico now make up a large portion of the seasonal landscape labor force in most areas of the country.

Work site raids have become a low priority of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). It has now initiated a less intrusive process: making appoint-

ments with businesses and auditing employee work documents. The major enforcement focus is now at the border, where the U.S. Border Patrol is expected to swell to more than 20,000 members in the next few years.

Unless we build a wall extending the length of the U.S.-Mexico border or send in the military, many believe there's no way to control the influx of illegal immigrants into this country. As long as they see the United States as the promised land, the steady flow will continue. And this means plenty of workers for low-skilled jobs in the landscape industry.

Devil in the details

The U.S. government is looking for ways to get a better control over the illegal alien situation. One idea that seems to be gaining ground with congressional leaders is a streamlined visa program allowing companies to hire foreign workers on a temporary basis.

Joe Greene, director of the INS district office in Denver, is skeptical. "With a guest worker program, the devil is always in the details," he says. "How do you control people to ensure that if they come in to work, they leave if it's temporary?"

There's an existing visa program for seasonal workers known as H2B, which allows up to 66,000 immigrant workers into this country per year. Controlled by the U.S. Department of Labor and the INS, it

grants American companies permission to hire foreign workers on a temporary basis — up to 10 months at a time — as long as they can prove they were unable to find U.S. workers to fill the positions.

H2B's biggest advantage is the higher probability of finding workers already skilled in landscape maintenance. And because the worker is legally in the United States, there won't be the usual problems with the INS. Many landscape contractors say the source of Mexican workers with green cards has dried up, another reason to use H2B.

Advantages for the workers

What's in it for the foreign worker? Under the H2B visa program, workers receive protection under the Fair Labor Standards Act, which stipulates that workers are to receive overtime, at least minimum wage and pay income taxes.

Many criticize H2B, especially the paperwork that comes with it. To facilitate the process, some landscape contractors hire an H2B agent — labor contractor — to take care of it. Labor contractors locate workers with landscape skills and see their clients through the entire process.

Do-it-yourself options

Is it a requirement to use an H2B agent to secure H2B workers? No.

Although it is more time consuming to handle the entire process on your own, it is

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continued from page 48

entirely feasible. You'll also save around several thousand dollars the agent would have charged as a fee.

The first step is to work with your state's workforce commission and the U.S. De-

partment of Labor. Make sure you put a dollar value on the time it takes you to work through the certification process. Compare it against the cost of using an H2B agent.

Even if you use an agent, you will still be required to write letters. Remember,

the H2B agent can't provide you with shortcuts around the legal process. In other words, don't get a false sense of security that the INS and U.S. Department of Labor will "look the other way" because you are involved with the program or working with an agent.

Use of the H2B program in the industry continues to grow. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the program is so successful that the number of workers certified has more than doubled in the last two years.

"Two years ago, the Dallas regional office did not even certify workers in the H2B program for landscape and related jobs. We thought there were enough U.S. workers," says John Bartlett, certifying officer with the U.S. Department of Labor's Dallas office.

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Top five reasons H2B workers quit

1. Housing is too expensive. Most H2B workers can only afford \$25 per week. The H2B housing should not be a direct company rental or it would fall under HUD standards.

2. Bad attitude from the foreman or supervisors. Use of foul language drives workers away.

3. No ride to and from work.

4. No evening recreation. These men are many miles from their families.

5. "Us" versus "them" atmosphere at work. They don't feel they are part of things.

Note: Check your local Labor Certification Office at the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment Training Administration for more information.

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continued from page 50

"The Texas Workforce Commission proved to the U.S. Department of Labor that this was not the case."

Give yourself lead time

How long does H2B certification take? According to Bartlett, the average certification time frame is now 60 to 90 days.

For some contractors, the jury is still out. Several irrigation and landscape contractors admitted they were beginning to use the program, but were unwilling to make a statement at this time. Two major green industry trade associations said they could not officially endorse the program and preferred not to make an official comment.

Ed LaFlamme, branch manager of Tru-Green LandCare in New Haven, CT, brought in 10 H2B workers in 1999. He

had mixed results, noting that several workers asked to return to Mexico. "Before a contractor brings these workers all the way from Mexico, he should carefully screen them beforehand. You need to look for flexible people who are experienced and want to work in the landscape industry," he adds.



Ed LaFlamme

Increase your success rate

"One of the most difficult factors with H2B is figuring out how you will assimilate foreign workers into your community and your company," says Scott Evans, owner of C. Scott, Inc., a labor placement firm located in Bay City, TX.

Evans says the first step is to become a bilingual company. "Teach your staff Spanish and hold English classes for the Spanish-speaking workers."

The second step is to recruit from friends and family of existing employees. "When the employee knows a person in your company, they can blend into the company and community much faster," he says.

"It's also important to prepare a welcome package for each H2B worker. Give them a company greeting letter and a company pad to write their families on their first day. Offer to mail the letters for them."

Don't forget the welcome meal. "After a long trip from Mexico, a meal is always appreciated," says Evans.

Robert E. Reaves is a turfgrass specialist with Van Waters & Rogers Inc. in Austin, TX.

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Circle No. 125 on Reader Inquiry Card



Develop your own Career track

These companies took care of their employees, only to watch them grow into competent managers and supervisors. Can you do the same with your people?

BY GEORGE WITTERSCHEIN

It's hard enough just finding good people to hire but what about developing those who have more responsibility? How do you determine the laborer who has what it takes to be a foreman or the foreman who could grow into a middle manager?

How do you even hold onto people long enough to develop them? The good ones often leave to start their own businesses.

We visited with three companies who have answers to these questions:

Environmental Industries Inc.

Environmental Industries Inc., of Calabasas, CA, is the largest privately owned landscape contracting company in the

United States. One of the areas in which they are known to excel is developing people from within into supervisors and then into managers. *LM* asked Bill Arman, EII's vice president for human resources, to explain that success:

LM: Developing people from within into supervisors and middle managers is something the industry traditionally does not do well. How do you do it?

Arman: The first step is to start with the end in mind. We try to visualize what types of businesses we are going to be in, what customers we are going to be relating with and what skill sets and technologies we will need.

Then we make our future thinking clear to the organization. We teach our people what the skill sets are that we will need for the future. We also have a process in place to analyze what they've learned so that the learning is stronger than just taking a one-day class and a two-day seminar.

LM: What kinds of things do you teach people as you develop them from within in this process?

Arman: We look at three main areas. The first area is the customer: how to look at the work from the customers' perspectives.

Second, how to deliver customers' concerns effectively and efficiently.

We look at production: How do we obtain it? We want to be well organized and to execute fundamentals (what we call

Best Practices.)

Third, there is the culture. We try to create the culture in our organization that has people transferring this knowledge to others as they work. We create that culture by financial means, by recognition of people, by offering varied experiences and cool assignments.

LM: Do you have success developing people from within?

Arman: That's primarily what we do — develop from within. You measure success by retaining qualified people who are doing their jobs. You can't look at your overall retention because keeping people who are not doing their job is not a good thing either. You have to reward the good performers, give the others a chance to improve, and take those who don't improve and give them a chance to succeed elsewhere.

LM: And do you also learn from other industries?

Arman: Yes. We have "tours" where we visit other operations that are not related to our business; for example, UPS, Federal Express, Home Depot and large organizations that are successful with lots of people development. And we observe, watch, ask lots of questions, meet with their human resources people and learn everything we can.



Bill Arman

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TruGreen-LandCare

Rex Gore is the south Texas regional manager for TruGreen-LandCare. Until last year, he was president of Clean Cut Inc.,

an Austin-based landscaping company that is now part of TGLC. Clean Cut grew at an average rate of 30% a year over a 13-year period, meaning their hiring and retention needs were staggering.

LM: So you had to retain the good people

you had, hire new people and develop and promote people from within — in a way that sustained 30% growth year after year.

Gore: That growth rate means we retained most of the good people we had, and hired a bunch more.

LM: And you clearly succeeded.

Gore: I believe so. When we sold to TruGreen, we had become a \$22-million/year business with 400 people. By the way, the business is still growing under TruGreen, and we're doing things much the same way, with some modifications to suit our corporate style.

LM: Do you hire supervisors and managers from outside or develop from within?

Gore: As far as managers, we have some people who came up through the ranks from crew positions. But more typically, mid- to upper-management comes from recruiting at colleges, especially more recently. In almost all cases, supervisors and foremen were hired as laborers within our companies. By displaying capabilities, and with some reasonably decent training, these are people who have developed into competent supervisory personnel.

LM: You must have had success retaining them long enough to develop them into supervisors?

Gore: Yes. As I'm looking through the list of foremen (reads names aloud), about half of these are people who started as laborers six to eight or 10 to 12 years ago.

LM: Why do you think they stayed with you long enough to develop into foremen?

Gore: It's not brain surgery. It's trying to hire pretty good people, then screening them rigorously. That means when you find people who don't show good attitudes or capabilities, you need to make that cut reasonably quickly at the laborer level. From there, there's always some people in any group that have leadership capabilities,

continued on page 61

5 ways to develop people

Landscape Management talked to Dave St. John, GreenSearch, an Atlanta-based consulting firm that does both management personnel searches and HR consulting. He shared some of his observations about developing productive supervisors and managers.

What do the successful companies do differently from the rest of the green industry? Several things, St. John says:

► **Owner visibility and concern.** "The successful ones, where we've seen long-

tenured people, are owners who personally stay involved. They're instrumental in hiring the people, they watch their progress and they look for the things in their behavior that indicate they can shoulder a heavier load."

► **People instinct.** "The successful owners we've seen also have an instinct about people. They know when someone is ready to move on to accept greater challenges. They can differentiate between technical challenges and the broader, more conceptual things which give a sense of supervisory ability."

► **Leadership observers.** "They watch for informal leaders who other people naturally start to follow."



Dave St. John

► **Clear communication.** "Good owners have the ability to state what they want from people and not how the people are to do it. That gives the emerging supervisor a platform from which to be creative and show what he or she can do.

"There isn't a particular route for supervisory development, especially for companies that don't have well developed recruiting processes. The basic element is very good people judgment on the part of the owners and senior decision makers."

► **New responsibilities.** "As for growing people into middle management, it's like the NBA draft. The further up you go on the totem pole, the fewer people from which to choose. To bridge someone from supervisor to manager, start giving the candidates more diverse things to do — things that are new and different. You might have them run two different segments of the business, lead three different kinds of crews or deal with new customers."

"Diversity of task really tests their scope. The difference is that a manager now has to manage results, not activities. Management's a different game. A supervisor is a team player; a manager is the team coach. There's a big difference!"

— George Witterschein



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Days used per week	5	5
Weeks used per year	26	26
Total hours used per year	1,040	1,040
Fluid ounce of fuel used per year	17,160	26,208
Gallons used per year (128 fl oz. = 1 gallon)	134	205
Gas cost per gallon	\$1.35	\$1.35
Oil cost per gallon of mix	\$.85	\$.85
Total gas & oil cost per gallon of mix	\$2.20	\$2.20
<hr/>		
Total fuel cost per year	\$294.80	\$451.00

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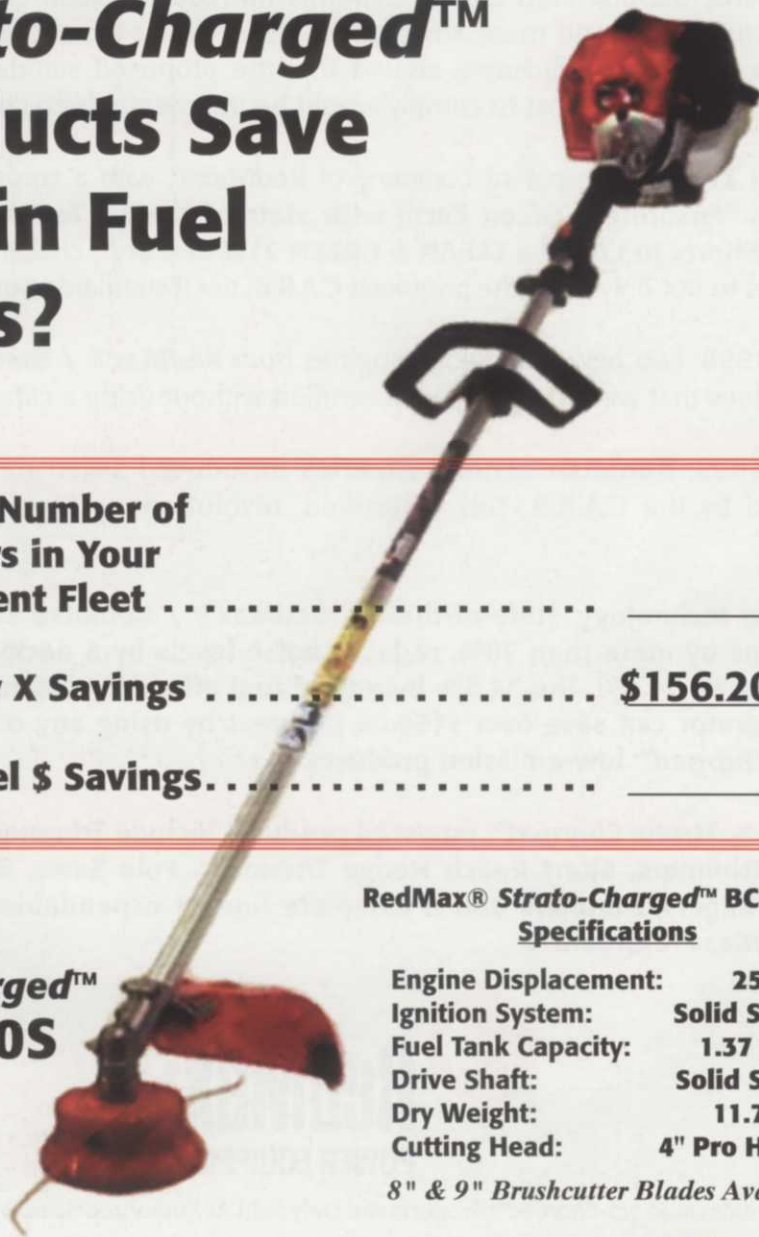
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- ▶ **Komatsu Zenoah**, the parent company of **RedMax®**, with a corporate mission statement that says "**Ensuring a Green Earth with state-of-the-art Technology, we are Steadily Making Efforts to Create a CLEAN & GREEN 21st Century**", challenged their engine design engineers to not only meet the proposed C.A.R.B. tier II standards but to exceed them.
- ▶ In May 1998, two new-technology engines from **RedMax® / Komatsu Zenoah** were the first engines that were C.A.R.B. Tier II certified without using a catalytic muffler.
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and it's a matter of finding them and recognizing them.

Keeping people is a function of several things: You've got to pay competitively, give them opportunities, treat them fairly, demonstrate concern for their welfare and appreciate they are human beings with needs.

LM: *How do you show concern for their human welfare?*

Gore: Anyone who has had success developing good people has been in situations where they're helping them out in a time of need. When they're struggling with an illness, you have to be tolerant. You should strive for perfection in this, I suppose, but even if you're only pretty good at it, you'll get good results.

LM: *Because so many other companies are so bad it?*

Gore (laughs): That's probably the case. There are a lot of things in life that aren't extremely urgent today but must get done or they will make life difficult in the future. Getting a job sold, getting a job done or collecting the money from that job — all those are urgent. Hiring someone who might be a good laborer and ultimately a good supervisor is important, but it's not urgent. You have to remind yourself that it's important. At some point, it becomes urgent if you don't make it important.

LM: *Still, it has to be hard to keep up with that yearly growth rate.*

Gore: It takes a lot of work, but it also makes it possible to keep good people and develop them from within. That's because growth provides opportunities for people with leadership capabilities and motivation.

Robertson Lawn Care

Robertson Lawn Care, Springfield, IL, does mostly lawn care for an upscale clientele

One company's experience

Keesen Enterprises Inc. in Englewood, CO, is a landscape contracting business with 140 employees and \$4 million in revenue. Landscape maintenance is its main business, along with irrigation, landscape construction, spraying, fertilization and snow removal. President Duane Keesen, a third-generation Colorado landscaper, speaks about the H2B program from experience.



Duane Keesen

"We were having an exceptionally difficult time hiring over the last couple of years," Keesen says. "Several years ago, we initiated an H2B program here and got off to a slow start. Eventually we went to Scott Evans, and we brought in 60 people last summer and 18 people in the winter.

"It was a wise thing for us to enter the program. What it cost us we probably tripled in profit. One of the reasons is that we bring in the people as a group and there is only one training period, which our bilingual supervisors do in-house. We find that jobs are getting done much faster than before. In the past, if somebody could walk, we would hire him.

It doesn't work in other industries

"I've gotten calls from other industries — drywall, roofers, concrete, construction — wanting to know how to get into this program. They would love to, but can't. We in the landscape industry are spoiled. We can get into it, but so many don't because of lack of understanding, or fear, or inability to provide the cash up front.

"To those who say they can't afford H2B, I say this program is the way to go because it's the right thing to do. The Bible tells us that if you build your house upon a rock it's going to stand, but if you build it on sand it's going to wash away. If you build your business on illegal people, you're building it on sand. You cannot promote within and before you turn around, you'll have huge fines.

"The only other possibility is to pay wages that compete with the roofing, sheet rock and general contracting markets. I'd love to do it, but it isn't there. If the construction industry cannot get good workers, we certainly can't at a lesser rate."

Each of his new employees has a sponsor, a company employee who makes the newcomer feel welcome. "Last year, when everybody first came up, it snowed. They had someone who could tell them what kind of boots to get. This works very well. We've only had to send two people back to Mexico. One had health problems and the other went to work for someone else, which is illegal."

Keesen and a lawyer have begun a campaign to persuade Congress to change the law to allow H2B workers to apply for a green card after a few years working here. The employer would then get back the prized H2B slot (remember, there are only 66,000 of them a year) once the green card is in place.

"My guess is that half or more of them would stay with us once they had green cards. But if they didn't stay with us, at least they would become available to the landscaping industry in general." (Keesen Enterprises, Inc., Englewood, Colorado; 303-761-0444.)

but is a small company and a growth company at the same time. Jack Robertson is president.

LM: What's your operation's size?

Robertson: At peak we have eight employees. Since starting our business in 1977, we've grown our customer base every single year.

LM: You've been able to achieve that



Jack Robertson

growth record with the same size workforce.

How?

Robertson: By being efficient. Our people's knowledge and experience is a huge part.

LM: Much of that knowledge and experience

belongs to your two senior service managers, Brian Cox (in his 20th year with the company) and Mike Harris (in his 19th). How did you manage to hold onto two good people for 20 years?

Robertson (laughs): If I knew the answer I'd bottle it!

LM: Perhaps it's not such a mystery.

Your formula for success boils down to something like this: Hire people whose values resemble yours and give them what they need to feel comfortable and satisfied with their jobs.

Robertson: We share bonuses yearly and throughout the year with our people, but the benefits package is minimal. We've been lucky in that Mike and Brian both have wives with good medical coverage.

LM: What does your company do right?

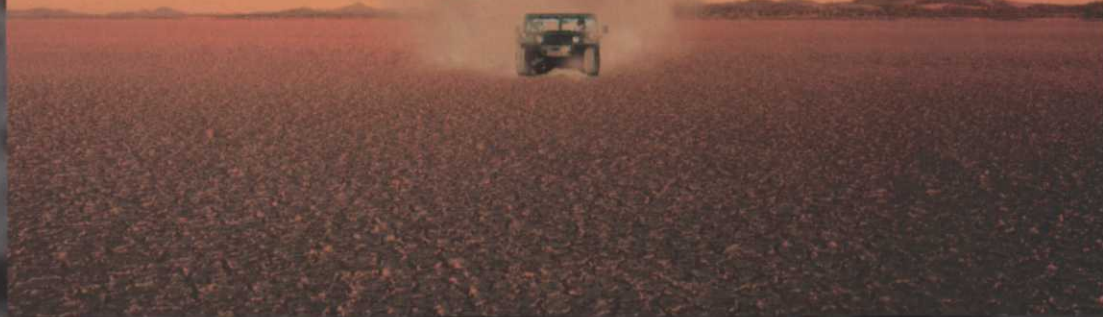
Robertson: No matter what business you're in, if you work that closely with people for that period of time, you become like family. And we're certainly like family here. For example, we like to do outdoor

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activities such as hunting together. There are other things that are just as important to us all. For example, we have kids that are not yet grown. It is important for

everybody to give the kids attention, and that means time. We're extremely flexible about things like letting people off to go to the track meet or the music recital.

I also want them to feel free to tell me

that they're going to take the time. That has worked well for us.

LM: So it's a matter of shared values.

Robertson: People and family come
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Why the labor crunch?

- "Unskilled native-born people, if they're going to work for \$7 or \$8 an hour, are going to do it indoors in a



Scott Evans

McDonald's where it's air conditioned in the summer and heated in the winter." — Bob Wingfield, Amigos Labor Solutions, Dallas

- "1976 was the lowest birth year

in the United States in the last 50 years.

So the demographic pool of 24-year-olds — a typical landscape worker's age — is very small to start with." — Scott Evans, C. Scott Inc., Bay City, TX

- "Do Latin American laborers harm America? No! These H2B people don't take jobs from people — they fill an incredible need. And the belief that Mexicans coming here to work in our industry are abusing the system couldn't be further from the truth. These people make a real contribution to our society. Americans often don't realize what would happen if (they) weren't here. Except for maybe South Dakota, the whole country would shut down! Under H2B, only 66,000 people are allowed in a year. That's less than one for every community in the U.S."

— Bob Wingfield

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bobcat

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first. It's easier to say that sometimes than to actually do it, especially when you're chief bottle washer for the business. But it's worth it.

I think Mike and Brian enjoy coming to work because they feel we have the same

values. They also enjoy their work because we do everything only one way, and that is the very best way that we can.

We do things a lot differently around here. I've been to a lot of lawn care offices, and while some are very nice, some aren't. But we designed a new one six years ago so

that it would be fun to walk in the door every day. And when you visit our office, you feel that.

In a sense, we've designed the whole company that way!

— *The author is a contributing editor for*

Landscape Management

Working with a labor consultant

One response to the scarcity of labor is to look elsewhere, yet who has the stamina or resources to take on government regulations involved in importing workers from Latin America?

Specialists have sprung up to assist you and here's a sample of what some of them told *Landscape Management*:

Bob Wingfield is president of Amigos Labor Solutions, Inc. in Dallas, which last year brought in 1,100 non-green-carded workers from Mexico for over 100 landscapers in 28 states.

"We've found out that the quality of the people you get under H2B exceeds anything you can get here in the United States anymore. The current source of green card workers from Mexico is dried up and those who do have green cards may be too old to go out and do green industry jobs, and they've become Americanized. The H2B program allows younger people to come in, with more of a work ethic.

* "We offer our clients a simple turnkey deal, starting at \$650 per worker and varying with the quantity. The client must also pay for a legally required newspaper notice. In exchange for that, we do everything, with no surprises and no hidden fees.

* "Another thing we offer is continuity. We find out the H2B workers who our clients liked from previous experiences, and we try to hire them

back again the next year. Out of the 1,100 workers we brought in last year, over 95% stayed." (Amigos Labor Solutions Inc., Dallas, TX; 214-634-0500; www.amigos-inc.com)

Angelo Miño is personnel director of Signature Landscape in Olathe, KS, and also has his own consulting company, Summit, in nearby Lenexa. Summit's mission is aimed at human resource directors.

"I teach them how to solve the problems of the different immigration regulations and laws," Miño says. "And I do a lot of consulting about how to work with Hispanics and use



Angelo Miño

the multicultural background of their labor force as a big plus.

* "Many industry people believe that there is only the H2B program, but in fact there

are about 18 permanent programs. Usually every year, there is a temporary program, often as a disaster relief effort, of which most people know nothing. We had a program for workers from Honduras after their hurricane. Right now, the INS is preparing a temporary program for workers from

Colombia and Peru.

* "We also offer an emergency line for clients who have sudden problems — like a surprise visit from the INS. And I have a subscription service where companies receive regular news — for example, those temporary programs." (Summit, Lenexa, KS; 913-438-3364; mariu48@excite.com)

Scott Evans was a landscape contractor in Bay City, TX. Today, he's president of C. Scott Inc., an H2B resource firm.

"I got tired of my guys coming from Mexico all cut up from barbed wire. Every document they showed us looked perfect. But I began to ask myself: Why are these guys cut up if everything is perfect? I looked for an alternative, and I stumbled on the H2B program. I've been doing it for three years for other people. In 1999, we brought in around 1,800 to 1,900 people for 42 clients, most of them in the Green Industry."

* Evans' staff of four bilingual people charges a set consulting fee per client, regardless of the number of workers the client wants to bring in. "The paperwork is substantial, but it's much the same for one person or for 5,000," he says. The initial retainer is \$3,500, followed by another \$2,100 at completion. After that, the charge is \$1,200/year for the required recertification. (C. Scott Inc., Bay City, TX; 409-245-7577; www.silc-h2b.com)



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BY JASON STAHL

You're called Captain Insano?

Yeah, the guys I work with call me that, and I think they got it from some movie they saw. The reason they call me that is because they ran into me one night at 9 p.m. and I was still working. They told me to go home and I said, "Hey, this is part of the business." I've installed things at midnight under the glow of car headlights.

What was your most difficult job?

The clubhouse at Arcadia Bluffs, a golf course in northern Michigan. We were on a tight schedule, and I was originally told that they needed us to install 60 sprinkler heads. The owner made some changes, and shortly after I found out that they needed 230 sprinkler heads...in two days. That was where having a brother in the same business helped out. I used some of his employees and we got the job done.

Talk about your brother. What's it like competing against him?

Gary owns Schepers' Lawn Sprinkling in Grand Rapids. I worked at his company through high school, college and five years beyond that before starting my own business. There's enough work in his area and my area that we rarely rub shoulders. Ironically, it's helpful that we own our own businesses because we can help each other out — for instance, if we need to borrow a machine or find a worker. We're brothers and we're in business and it's a touchy area, but there is more to life than making a buck. We keep it on the up and up.

What's the conversation like at the Thanksgiving dinner table?

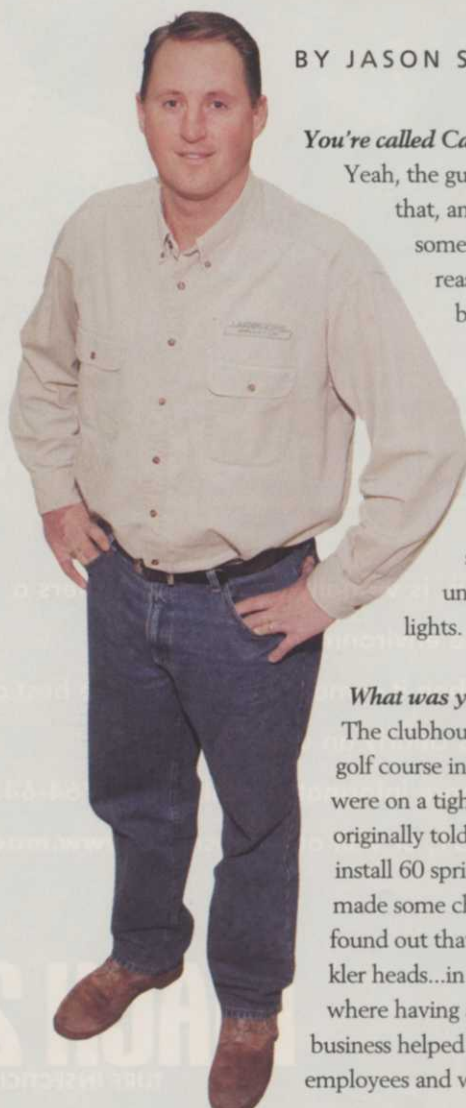
We talk very little about business at Thanksgiving. When we used to work together, we never talked about sprinkling. Now that we're 20 miles away from each other and don't see each other that often, we talk about the business for five minutes or so when we get together.

How has your labor situation been?

It's probably not been the worst case. I've only lost one employee in the last five years. It comes down to being a good boss, being fair and honest. I've done every job from the ground up — I dug holes as a kid, hooked heads and managed crews. I know what everybody's feelings are at every stage of the job. You have to stay close to your guys because nobody wants a boss who sits in the office all day. If your employees don't think you're slacking, then they won't slack. No employee is going to work harder than the boss, because the boss sets the benchmark.

Occasionally, an employee will want to leave to start his own business, and that's going to happen.

continued on page 70



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Green Space

continued from page 68

But I emphasize that things stay professional and we stick to ground rules. When that happens, there can actually be a benefit. We can even refer customers to each other.

You seem pretty laid-back about your business.

Don't get me wrong, I'm as competitive as anyone. I just think that there's more to life than making a buck. We all have lives going on, we all have struggles. Just because a person is a competitor does not mean we can't get along. I try to keep a good perspective.

Company at a glance

Years in business: 5

Annual revenue: Not available

Projected growth for 2000: 30%

Number of employees: 2 full-time, 4 seasonal

Commercial accounts: 30%

Residential accounts: 70%

Other services offered: Christmas light installation

Business in installation/design: 80%

Business in maintenance: 20%

Market area: Western Michigan

What are some of the differences between installing irrigation in the North and the South?

One thing is that we use polyethylene pipes instead of PVC like the contractors in, say, Florida. That's because we have freezing conditions in Michigan, and PVC would crack. The reason that they use PVC in Florida is that there is an element in the soil that eats away polyethylene.

Another difference is that we are a seasonal industry

and don't have the luxury of having significant income four to five months a year.

How has your family taken to all your hard work?

Starting out is difficult, but I've done a lot better in the last few years. I've been fortunate enough to have good employees so that I can let the business run itself a little more instead of me coddling it. To be able to stand back and say enough and go home to my wife, Kelly, and sons, Nathan and Luke, is nice.

It looks like you've invested quite a bit in your Web site.

I started it two years ago, and I'm currently in the process of redoing some of it with new ideas I have. I don't get a huge amount of business from it but I don't really try to. People check it out for general information. As a business, you have to have the whole package, and that's why I have a Web site.

Does the "whole package" include a new office?

Yeah, I ran my business out of my home until this year, when we moved into a 2,400-sq.-ft. office condominium. It's enough space to work, I guess. An office is never big enough.

What has been the key to your success?

It's not really as hard as I thought to be successful in business. You have to say what you can do and do it. And you can't be afraid to tell somebody you can't do something. People want to be everything to everybody, but you have to stick to your guns. Know your mission statement and your niche. I don't go out and put sprinkling systems in golf courses because that's just not my thing. I'm not geared for that.

Sometimes I sell \$10,000 sprinkling systems to customers, but it's not so much selling to high-end customers as it is doing a quality job. It's easier on the short side of things to cut corners, but it's a quicker way to end your business and establishing a reputation you can't get rid of.

What will your industry be like in the year 3000?

We'll be installing sprinkler systems on Mars.

Will you ever sell and get out of the business?

Some day, because that's the type of person I am. I'm the type who wants to do something and get it working as well as it can and, as soon as that happens, change over to something new. Irrigation is in my blood, but I think I could let it go even though it would be hard to get used to. I'll never fully retire because I'd like to try others things like construction management.

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Property at a glance

Location: Abbott Laboratories,
Chicago, IL

Staff: North Chicago Grounds Maintenance

Category: Industrial or office park

Total budget: \$805,000

Year site built: 1925

Acres of turf: 42.7

Acres of woody ornamentals: 11.2

Acres of display beds: 1.5

Total paved area: 73.6 acres

Total man-hours/week: 515

Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Congestion — air quality
- ▶ Company growth/expansion
- ▶ Regulatory compliance

Project checklist

(Completed in last two years):

- ▶ Building R14
- ▶ Parking lot 5
- ▶ Gate 2 entrance

On the job

- ▶ 10 full-time staff, 6 seasonal employees, 6 licensed pesticide operators

Abbott Laboratories

The 1999 Grand Award Winner of the Professional Grounds Management Society for Industrial or Office Park

Who ever said that science wasn't beautiful? Located on a 220-acre tract of land bordering the shores of Lake Michigan in North Chicago, the grounds at "Abbott on the Lake" are expected to be nothing short of perfect. That's not a surprise considering that Abbott Laboratories is a Fortune 500 health care and pharmaceutical company.

During peak growing season, North Chicago Grounds Maintenance mow and irrigate turf areas at least once a week, routinely maintain flower beds and hedges and collect litter.

Snow removal has been a top priority at Abbott ever since a 1979 New Year's Eve storm left the manufacturing plant buried for two weeks. From Nov. 1 to April 1, the entire grounds crew is on 24-hour call in case of any sudden snowstorms. Snow has to be cleared from 70 acres of pavement and hauled away to a remote snow dump site on the perimeter of the property.

Can you imagine being told that you cannot use mowing equipment, fertilizers and pesticides one day because the ozone levels exceed the national standard? That's another challenge the contractor has to overcome, as well as strict plant cleanliness requirements from the government and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.





► Edging a sidewalk is easier using a trimmer with edger attachment.

▼ Effective use of both color and texture make this flower bed a real focal point.

Editors' note: *Landscape Management* is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional Grounds Management

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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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Weed control:

turf vs. ornamental beds

Some products suited for turf can damage ornamental beds, and vice versa. Before you use postemergents on adjacent areas, learn which products to avoid

BY JEFFREY F. DERR



Weeds commonly move from turf areas into ornamental beds and from beds to turf areas. The control strategies may be different in the two areas, however.

My previous article ("Control T & O Crossover Weeds," *Landscape Management* November 1999), discussed weeds that are common to turf and ornamental areas. Since you may maintain both turf and ornamental beds, I discussed the herbicides that can be applied to both areas to control these crossover weeds. If you can use the same products in both lawns and ornamental beds, your weed management program becomes much less complex.

Unfortunately, some chemicals can only be applied to turf, and others can only be applied to ornamentals. You should know how to use these products to avoid damage to desirable plants.

Differences matter

A major difference between turf and ornamental beds is that we are maintaining a perennial grass in our lawns while maintaining predominantly annual and perennial broadleaf species in landscape beds. The tolerance of broadleaves to an herbicide is often quite different from that seen in a perennial grass. This is especially true for postemergent herbicides. The similarities in weed control in lawns and ornamental beds occur primarily with preemergent crabgrass herbicides.

Ornamental grasses are becoming increasingly important in landscapes and herbicide use in these plants is quite similar to that used in turfgrass. Herbicide tolerance in nongrass monocots such as daylily, liriopie and tulip, however, can be different from that in turfgrasses. Due to the diversity of plants being grown in ornamental beds, it is important to have an understanding of herbicide tolerance across ornamental beds and turf.

The differences that occur in turf and ornamental herbicides fall primarily into three categories: 1. post-emergence herbicides used for broadleaf weed control



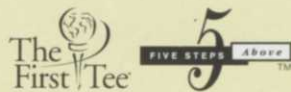
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in turf; 2. herbicides used for perennial grass control in ornamentals; and 3. nonselective herbicides used in ornamentals.

Turf damage control

A number of selective postemergence broadleaf herbicides are used in lawns, including 2,4-D; 2,4-DP; MCPP; MCPA; dicamba; and triclopyr. They are often referred to as growth-regulator herbicides and are usually applied in two-way or three-way combinations for broader-spectrum broadleaf control. As with broadleaf weeds, broadleaf ornamentals are usually quite sensitive to members in this group. Their exposure to small quantities of these herbicides can cause systemic damage. These chemicals can also damage conifers and nongrass monocots.

There are three major ways that injury to broadleaf ornamentals can occur with these herbicides: spray drift, vapor drift and root uptake. Use caution when applying these compounds to avoid spray droplet drift into ornamental beds (they should be applied when winds are light). Granular formulations could be used in certain situations where spraying would be difficult, but although granular formulations eliminate the potential for spray drift, they still can damage broadleaf ornamentals through root uptake.

Vapor drift occurs when these products are applied under high temperatures (especially over 85 degrees F). These chemicals leave the soil surface as a vapor and move with wind to sensitive crops. The risk is greatest with ester formulations, which are more volatile than amine formulations. Thus, when making applications in late spring or summer when trees and shrubs are actively growing, you would prefer amine formulations to minimize vapor drift. It would be safer to apply ester formulations after deciduous trees and shrubs have dropped their leaves in fall.

All of these growth-regulator compounds are mobile in the soil. After rain or irrigation leaches these compounds into the soil, the potential exists for tree or shrub roots to absorb these herbicides. Overapplication within the dripline of a tree or shrub can lead to root uptake and damage.

Target the application

The compounds in the 2,4-D group are difficult to clean out of a sprayer. It might be better to use a different sprayer to apply these compounds than one used to apply fungicides and insecticides to ornamental beds.

TABLE 1

Herbicides used predominantly in cool and/or warm season turf species.

Growth regulators: 2,4-D 2,4-DP dicamba MCPA MCPP triclopyr	Triazines: atrazine metribuzen	Other: imazaquin MSMA quinclorac
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TABLE 2

Herbicides used predominantly in ornamental beds.

Postemergence grass: clethodim fluzafop sethoxydim	Nonselective: diquat glufosinate glyphosate pelargonic acid	Other: dichlobenil oxyfluorfen pronamide
--	--	--

Trace amounts of a growth regulator herbicide can cause severe damage to broadleaf ornamentals.

Quinclorac (Drive) is one of the newer herbicides registered for turf use. Besides controlling crabgrass, quinclorac also controls certain broadleaves, such as white clover. Because of this broadleaf activity, it must be used with caution around ornamentals. It, like the 2,4-D group, is both leaf and root absorbed. Avoid spray drift into ornamental beds and ensure that the correct rate is being applied to avoid exposing tree and shrub roots to high levels of this chemical.



Most of the postemergence grass herbicides applied to broadleaf ornamentals cannot be used for grass control in turf.

While the triazine herbicides atrazine and metribuzen can be applied to certain warm-season turf species, they cannot be applied to ornamental beds. Both compounds are absorbed by leaves and roots. By a similar fashion, imazaquin (Image) is used predominantly on turf and will damage certain ornamental species. It can be used on certain woody ornamentals, however. The organic arsenical MSMA is used primarily on turf for postemergence control of crabgrass, yellow nutsedge and certain broadleaf weeds. Avoid drift onto ornamental species.

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J. DERR

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Ornamental bed options

One group of compounds that can be used in broadleaf and nongrass monocots are the postemergence grass herbicides. This group includes fluazifop (Fusilade II/Ornamec), sethoxydim (Vantage) and clethodim (Envoy). Fenoxaprop (Acclaim Extra) is also in this group but certain turf species will tolerate fenoxaprop. Turf species generally have less tolerance to fluazifop, sethoxydim and clethodim than to fenoxaprop.

Postemergence grass herbicides have an opposite control spectrum than the 2,4-D group. These control grasses and do not affect other monocots (like daylily) or broadleaves, and are used to control perennial grasses like quackgrass, bermudagrass and johnsongrass. In some cases, certain turfgrass species will tolerate one or more of these compounds. In most situations, however, drift will damage Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, tall fescue, bermudagrass and other turf species.

The postemergence grass herbicides are primarily absorbed by leaves. They can exhibit preemergence effects but have very short half-lives in soil. Since postemergence grass herbicides have short soil residual action, the primary concern is spray drift onto turf areas.

Several other herbicides are used to control certain perennial grasses in ornamental crops. Dichlobenil (Barrier/Casoron) and pronamide (Kerb) will control perennial grasses such as tall fescue. Pronamide can be

Determine the tolerance of both the turf species and ornamental species when applying herbicides in a landscape.

used on bermudagrass turf but will damage most cool-season grasses (it is applied as a sprayed application). Avoid spray drift onto turfgrass.

Dichlobenil is applied in granular form. When used in woody ornamental beds, ensure that granules are not being thrown into turf areas. If heavy rains occur soon after an application of these herbicides,

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Herbicide eases timing problems

Chris Randall, grounds management manager for Bland Landscaping, Apex, NC, knows the drill. If weather or other factors prevent him from taking care of his clients on time and weeds emerge, he expects a call from his upscale residential or industrial clients.

"I'll have to send a spray technician back to the site to re-apply a herbicide, adding to costs, lowering profit margins and damaging the company's credibility," Randall says. "Relying only on preemergence products increases our vulnerability because of the narrow application window."

His clients want reliable, broad-spectrum postemergence weed control, he notes. "We lose money when we have to retreat a property. We need effective products that enlarge the treatment window."



Eric Eibelheuser, IPM coordinator for Bland Landscaping, treats a commercial account.

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continued from page 80

damage could occur to turf areas downhill from the treated areas.

Oxyfluorfen (Goal) is used as a sprayed treatment in conifers and deciduous trees, and is applied in various granular formulations for weed control in woody ornamental beds. It has both foliar and soil activity and can burn herbaceous species. Oxyfluorfen does not cause systemic injury but can cause unacceptable damage if sufficient spray drift occurs.

Nonselective products

Nonselective postemergence herbicides are usually the only option for controlling emerged broadleaf weeds in ornamental beds. This group includes glyphosate (Roundup Pro), glufosinate (Finale), diquat (Reward) and pelargonic acid (Scythe). Since they are nonselective, they must be kept off the foliage of ornamentals as well as turfgrass.

Directed sprays can be used in upright-growing woody ornamental species. Apply with caution so spray drift to turf does not occur. There are a limited number of places where these compounds can be used in turf, such as dormant applications of glyphosate in bermudagrass.

Diquat and pelargonic acid are contact herbicides. If spray drift did occur, turfgrasses would be expected to quickly outgrow the damage. Since glyphosate and glufosinate are systemic, turf exposed to these two chemicals will show damage for a longer period of time.

These compounds can be used safely and effectively in turf or landscape beds for weed control, but you have to be more careful when applying these compounds due to the potential for damaging nontarget plants. Make sure you've calibrated sprayers and granular applicators correctly and avoid applications on windy days. Use the formulation least likely to move off-site if sensitive species are nearby and check the herbicide label to determine tolerant species and any special use precautions.

— *The author is a professor of Weed Science with Virginia Tech.*

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Timing issues

It's an industry-wide concern for professional contractors with growing client lists, a limited labor pool and an already narrow treatment window that may shrink even more with wet or cold weather. These companies feel the time crunch every spring.

Bert McCarty, associate professor at Clemson University's horticulture department in Clemson, SC, says the pre-emergence window is often hard to determine. "Preemergence herbicide timing is a crap shoot and the logistics

of treating a large clientele make the problem even more difficult."

McCarty has tested a new postemergence herbicide quinclorac (Drive DF), now available from TopPro Specialties, which offers breathing room for spring herbicide applications. "Drive helps widen the window of opportunity," he says. "It expands the time lawn care operators can apply pre-emergence herbicides."

The new material controls crabgrass, clover, dandelion and other early spring weed and grass problems as a postemergence application and offers residual control. An applicator may delay pre-emergence application several weeks, then use it in a tank mix with the usual preemergence herbicides to clean up target weeds and limit callbacks.

"This may be a solution for LCOs' spring application timing problems," McCarty says.

He also noted the rapid control. "It is quick and effective on crabgrass with almost total elimination in five to seven days. Most products don't work that quickly or that effectively."

The art of timing

Timing problems are not confined to the South. Bill Pound, turfgrass extension specialist at The Ohio State University, says the short transition between winter and summer in Ohio can cause similar timing problems.

"Lawn care operators may miss the crabgrass window if they don't apply preemergence herbicides until late April or early May," he says.

Nick Christians, Iowa State University, has been impressed with the material's speed of control. "I was surprised that it kills crabgrass within 24 hours. It's also effective on clover."

Drive is labeled for both cool-and warm-season turfgrasses.

For more information, contact TopPro Specialties, a business unit of BASF Corporation and Micro Flo Company at 800-451-8461. The Web site is

www.topprospecialties.com.



Eibelheuser applies an early summer herbicide treatment on an upscale account.

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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		

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Best way to spray

BY CURT HARLER/
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Whether the job calls for spot treating near delicate flowers or broadcasting over acres of turf, there is a sprayer for the job.

Backpack, mower-mounted, truck-mounted and self-propelled models are available. Several manufacturers offer spray shields to contain drift and assure accurate application of materials.

Most units, regardless of size, have a hose and nozzle for spot spraying. Be sure to check the comfort of that trigger mechanism on a spray gun before you buy. A long day with an uncomfortable or stiff trigger grip will cramp a worker's hand long before the back gives out.

AGRI-FAB 217/728-8388

www.agri-fab.com

Agri-Fab, Sullivan, IL, offers several 15-gal. sprayers. The spot sprayer runs on a 12-volt pump and generates up to 70 psi, moving 1 gpm. The tractor-mounted unit's output is 1.4 gpm at 70 psi. Its boom gives 80-in. spray width, or use the 12-ft. handgun hose.

Circle #267

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Sprayers from Bush Hog, Mobile, AL, fit popular vehicles and come in 200 and 300-gal. versions for PTO- or engine-drive. Sprayers have 4-way jet agitation, break-

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Circle #269

CHAMPION SPRAY SYSTEMS 800/825-7622

Aluminum spray rig from Champion, Pittsburg, CA, comes with ei-



Champion

ther a 50-gal. or 100-gal. poly tank, both with 10-in. fill wells. Hannay hose reel holds 300 feet of PVC spray hose linked to a PG-120 Champion spray gun with adjustable tip.

Circle #270



Lesco

buying tips

- ▶ **If it's a backpack unit, what does it weigh? Can everyone on the team carry it for hours at a time?**
- ▶ **Look at both gallons per minute and pressure – pressure is key to drive material into foliage.**
- ▶ **Check ability to agitate in the tank.**
- ▶ **Look at hose length, especially on mounted units.**
- ▶ **Check for positive seal at the top and spray hose.**

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New SprayTek DS-300 sprayer from Textron Turf Care, Racine, WI, has Turf-Truckster chassis components and is powered by a 34-hp liquid-cooled Suzuki gas engine. Mechanical ground speed governor works with the spray booms for precise coverage. The 300-gal. tank has a 10-gal. deep suction pump, venturi jet agitators and 15- or 20-ft. booms.

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John Deere

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Circle #273

JACTO
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www.jacto.com

The CD550 knapsack sprayer from Jacto, Tualatin, OR, is the first with a fully internal piston pump. Rated at 5.5 gal., it has an operating pressure of 15 to 65 psi and an internal me-

chanical agitator for constant mixing. Anatomical shape fits operator's back.

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The MS-100 backpack sprayer from Echo, Lake Zurich, IL, has a 4.5-gal. tank for applications of



Echo

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909/548-4848

gearmore2@earthlink.net

Compact 50-gal. sprayers from Gearmore, Chino, CA, offer a special diaphragm pump for



Gearmore

high volumes at high pressure. Available in trailer, 3-pt. hitch or skid-mounted designs, sprayers are powered by motors or are PTO-driven. The skid unit nestles nicely into the back of smaller pick-up trucks.

Circle #276

JONATHAN GREEN
800/526-2303

www.jonathangreen.com

The Yard Tender 20 is a 2-gal., hand-held sprayer available through Jonathan Green, Farmingdale, NJ. It can spray continuously for 10 minutes and is made of heavy-gauge aluminum with a polyethylene tank. Designed for gravity flow, it drains from the bottom.

Circle #277

KROMER CO.
800/373-0337

The self-propelled sprayer from Kromer, Mound, MN, has a hydrostatic transmission for forward/reverse with a single foot pedal control and can come with four sizes of spray booms.

Circle #278

LESCO
800/321-5325

Check out the poly and fiberglass 50 to 300-gal. sprayers from Lesco, Rocky River, OH. All are powered by Honda engines, with optional 12-volt silent spray pump for the 50-, 10- and 200-gal. poly units. All poly and the 100-gal. fiberglass unit have adjustable brass, triple-jet agitator to keep solutions mixed.

Circle #279

MACKISSIC, INC.
610-495-7181

The Mighty Mac sprayers from MacKissic, Parker Ford, PA, come on large, wide-tread wheels that won't mar lawns. Five models range from the 14-gal. tow-behind PS 514T to the 50-gal. PS350T and PS350T-10. Tanks have pistol-grip guns for fine mists or hard streams.

Circle #280

MARUYAMA
425-885-0811

Model MS-068 backpack sprayer from Maruyama, Redmond, WA, discharges 1.6 gpm at 362 psi, with a 6.1-gal. tank. The MS-036 weighs 15.6 lbs., and discharges 1.6 gpm at pressure up to 170 psi. Both have a 2-cycle 22.5-cc engine.

Circle #281

MASTER MANUFACTURING
712/258-0108

The TC2502 (30 gal.) and TC5502 (55 gal.) Turf Choice sprayers from Master Manufacturing, Sioux City, IA, are built on a steel frame with noncorrosive poly tank and flotation tires. They come with adjustable nozzle trigger gun.

Circle #282

MTD PRO
330/225-2600

www.mtdpro.com

Large-capacity tank sprayers from MTD Products, Inc., Cleveland, OH, are powered by 4-hp. Kawasaki engines. The SY200 has a 200-gal., high-impact polyethylene or fiberglass tank. It delivers 14 gpm at 550 psi.

Circle #283

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in the backyard,



not to mention the local links!

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Environmental Biocontrol, Int. a division of DCV, Inc.
3521 Silverside Rd. Wilmington, DE 19810

Contact us: 800-468-6324
or visit: www.flightcontrol.com

Circle 141

Im reports

PECO 800/438-5823

The Power Sprayer from PeCo, Inc., Arden, NC, has aluminum and brass parts, oversized wheels and wide-mouth 5-gal. removable tank. See liquid levels in clear tank. **Circle #284**

PERMA-GREEN SUPREME 800/346-2001

The Ride-On Sprayer/Spreader from Perma-Green, Crown Point, IN, treats an acre in 15 minutes. Unit moves at 4.5 mph and sprays a 9-ft. swath. It fits through a 36-in. gate. **Circle #285**

PROLAWN 800/292-3628 www.prolawnsprayshields.com

Equip commercial mowers with the Prolawn Spray Shield and assure accurate application. Made in Elm Grove, WI, these shields and curtains contain spray within the spraying chambers. Units are available from 52- and 132-in. wide. **Circle #286**

ROGERS INNOVATIVE 888/975-8294 www.rogersinnovative.com

Windfoil electric drift containment sprayer from Rogers Innovative, Saskatoon, SK, Canada controls drift floating in the air. The TE1500 is equipped with electric pump run off a standard 12-volt battery. **Circle #287**

SHINDAIWA 800/521-7733

Shindaiwa's Model SP415 is made of high density, UV-protected polyethylene to resist most chemicals. It comes with four spray nozzles and padded shoulder straps. **Circle #288**

SMITHCO 610/688-4009 www.smithco.com

Spray Star 1000 turf sprayer from Smithco, Wayne, PA, controls ground speed and application rates via hydraulic tight-turn

power steering. All have stability and three spray control options. **Circle #289**

SMUCKER 800-333-4503 www.smucker.net

The Top Gun line of ATV-mounted sprayers from Smucker Manufacturing, Harrisburg, OR, is available with 5-ft. boom with 4 tips or 12-ft. boom with 8 tips. Units have diaphragm pumps with Viton seals. **Circle #290**

SOLO, INC. 757/245-4228 www.solo-germany.com

The Accu-Sprayer line from Solo, Sindelfingen, Germany, consists of quality manual high-pressure sprayers and backpack sprayers. The Solo 457 is a 7.5-liter unit weighing about 5.75 lbs. dry, which comes with a spray wand. **Circle #291**

TRI-CON INC. 800/448-2486

Check out the products from Tri-Con, Cleveland, OH. Some attachments are the S-125 adjustable nozzle water spray gun which can be used with the 824 extension wand. **Circle #292**

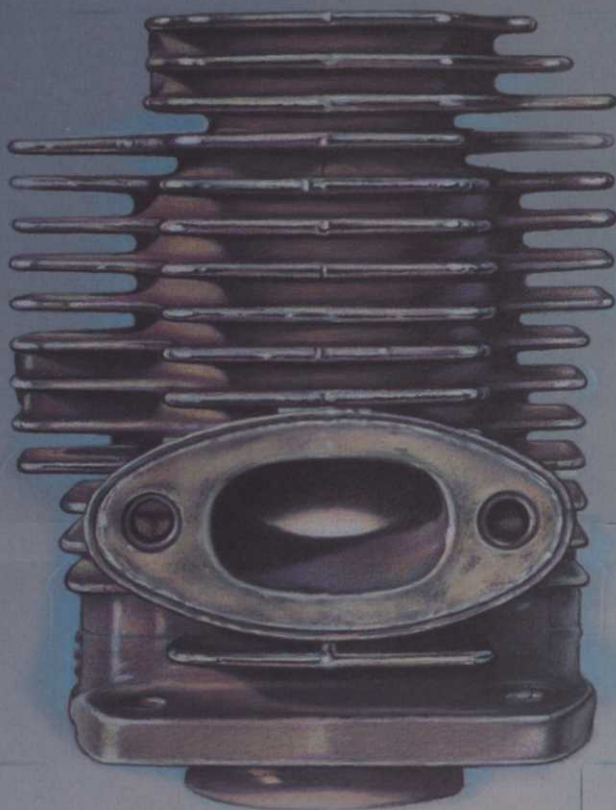
WESTHEFFER CO., INC. 800/362-3110 www.westheffer.com

Westheffer, Lawrence, KS, has enclosed bodies for sprayers. Choose an 8-ft. body for standard 1-ton pickup chassis or the 12-ft. body for a 1-ton chassis. Both have rugged construction, fold-down spray doors and roll-up rear cargo doors. **Circle #293**

WHEEL SPRAY CORP. 262/646-8640 www.wheelspray.home.att.net

The WS-485 Grounds Wheelie from Wheel Spray, Delafield, WI, has motorless application; twin wheel pumps; easy-to-push rubber tires, steel frame, 6-gal. tank. **Circle #294**

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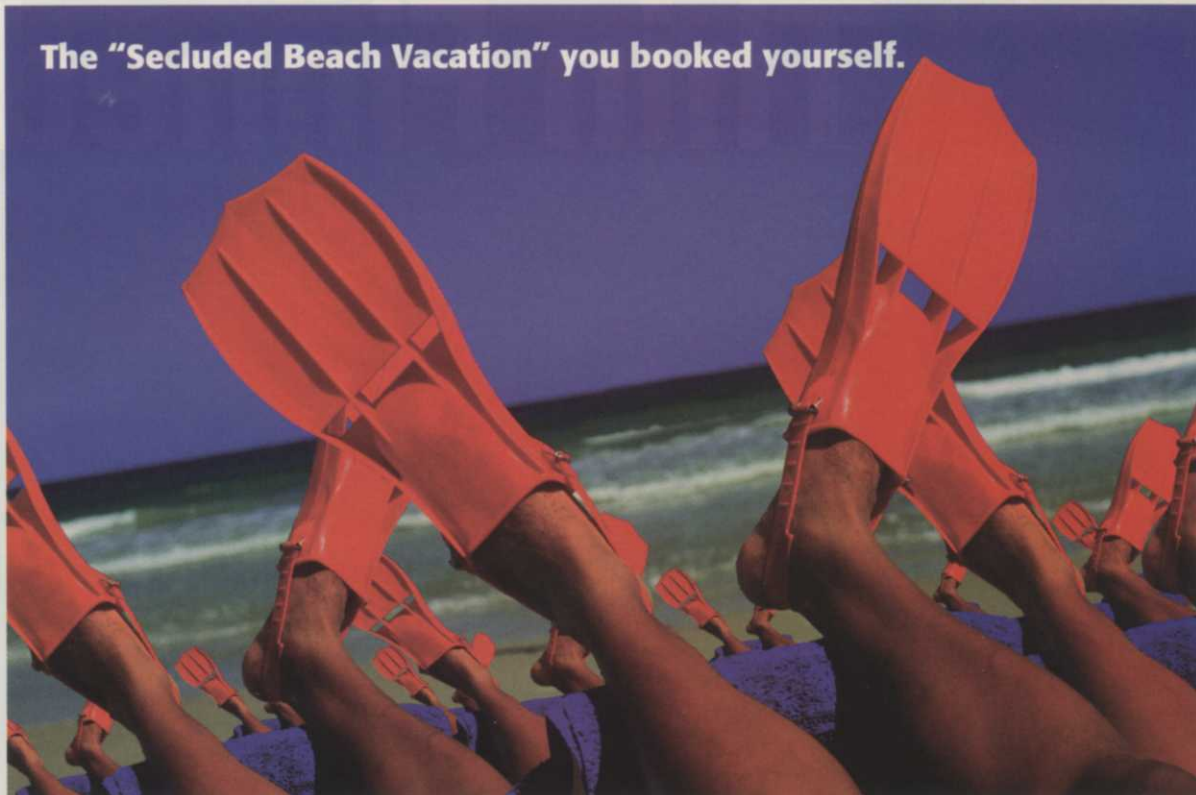
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ask the expert

BY BALAKRISHNA RAO

Chipco 26019 disappearing?

We heard from someone at a conference that Chipco 26019 will not be available in the future. Is this true?

— PENNSYLVANIA

What you heard is partially true. I learned from an Aventis Environmental Science representative that Chipco 26019 can still be used, except on home lawns. That means it is available in the year 2000 and can be used on golf courses, athletic fields and commercial sites. Only residential lawns are restricted. However, before purchasing and/or using Chipco 26019, make sure that the fungicide is labeled for use on your specific site to avoid any future legal problems.

Alternative chemical choices

At a recent conference, a speaker indicated that both Dursban and Diazinon might be discontinued or phased out for our lawn pest management. If it is true, what are the alternatives?

— OHIO

I believe what the speaker might have mentioned is that in the near future we may lose organophosphate products such as Dursban and Diazinon during the evaluation and re-registration process.

In the meantime, become familiar with newer products and different groups of chemistry. For example, some of the pyrethroids such as Talstar, Astro, Scinitar, and Deltagard should help manage surface insects like chinch bugs, billbugs and sod webworms.

Products such as Mach 2, Merit and Flagship would be good to manage white

grubs and a number of other chewing pests. For managing caterpillars, black cutworms, sod webworms and armyworms you can choose among a number of products such as Conserve, Talstar, Astro, etc.

Contact the manufacturer or dealer for pesticide labels and become familiar with the destructive pests and new products in the market. Then, make a timing chart of the pest activity period in your area. Afterward, choose a product that would provide broad spectrum management of pests at a given period with the recommended rates and frequency of application.

In my opinion, the objective should be to spot and treat with multiple target principles. The pest management program should be designed to obtain multiple pest control. If targeted properly, there will be superior control with a minimum exposure to a given pesticide and possible delay or elimination of resistance build-up to a given product.

Dutch elm disease

In the October 1999 issue of Landscape Management, you advised applying two inches of water per week to mature trees to avoid drought stress.

This raises the question: What area is the two inches to be applied over? What if under the tree, the area is covered by grass that gets daily watering?

— CALIFORNIA

I should have emphasized that the two inches of water needs to be applied once a week in a single application.

Soil is moistened from the surface downward as water is applied. In a typical landscape soil, each 0.2 inch of water ap-

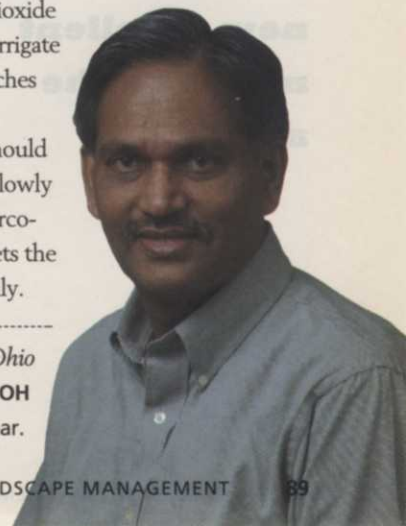
plied over the soil surface will moisten soil to a depth of about one inch. Applying two inches, then, would moisten soil to a depth of 10 inches. Most of the absorbing roots of trees are located within this soil profile.

The actual amount of water required to saturate soils to a depth of 10 inches will vary depending upon texture, density, infiltration and percolation rate, vegetation, temperature and prevailing winds. Because of the variety of contributing factors, it is difficult to generalize the amount and/or frequency of irrigation needed during drought. However, in a survey that we conducted in 1988, most extension and university researchers felt that two inches of water a week was sufficient. You can determine the specific amount of water needed in your situation by monitoring soil moisture content using moisture meters such as a Tensiometer.

Generally, tree roots are watered by irrigating the soil within the dripline area or one to two feet beyond. Because some tree species are sensitive to trunk decay, be sure to keep water away from the trunk.

If the area under the tree is covered with grass, periodically allow the turfgrass in this area to dry out to the point of slight wilting (you should be able to detect "foot printing"). This will improve gaseous exchange in the soil (oxygen in, carbon dioxide out). Then irrigate with two inches of water.

Water should be applied slowly so that it percolates and wets the soil uniformly.



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.



Going after those ghastly geese

Once geese find a home, it's hard to discourage them. Persistence and a new repellent might be the answer

full-time employees, specializes in the commercial market, servicing schools, industrial parks, condo complexes and businesses. Most of its programs are based on integrated pest management (IPM) methods, according to Jim Leszuk, president.

The challenge

Heritage faced the challenge of herding the feathered pests away from Quinnipiac's commons areas and athletic fields, keeping the site free of bacteria-laden droppings, mess and costly turf repairs. "Geese can take a lawn and thin it to dirt," says Lynch. "And unless you replace or renovate the lawn, you

Quinnipiac College sits adjacent to Sleeping Giant Mountain near Hamden, CT. This attractive, landscaped campus is home to nearly 6,000 students interested in business, health sciences and liberal arts.

The beautiful setting is also home to about 100 geese who strip lawns and leave mounds of unsightly droppings, according to Timothy Lynch, manager of Heritage Lawns Inc. in Plainville, CT.

Not an unusual problem

What Heritage and other lawn care companies around the country are dealing with is the burgeoning numbers of Canada geese. They feed on school athletic fields, corporate commons, golf course greens and fairways, parks and recreational areas — any attractive food source with ponds and waterways.

Solving the problem was particularly important to school officials, since the geese selected "high profile" areas of the college for their meals and roosting: a field area near the main entrance of the school, a half-acre pond surrounding a heavy traffic quad area and the athletic fields.

Heritage Lawns, founded 12 years ago, provides lawn, tree and shrub care in Connecticut and, more recently, in western Massachusetts. The company, with eight



are going to have weeds and crabgrass that make the area unsightly."

After trying one spray product that did not deter the geese, Lynch tried a new product developed by Environmental Biocontrol International, a division of DCV, Inc. in Wilmington, DE. The product, called Flight-Control, is a naturally occurring compound that is not harmful to animals, vegetation, humans or geese when used according to the label. The goose repellent mixes with water and is applied with standard spray equipment. In Lynch's case, the equipment was a John Deere Gator with an 80-gal. tank and a boom capable of treating a 12-ft. swath of turf. He added a spreader sticker to the tank mix to help the product adhere to the grass.

Reduced maintenance

Lynch treated about 14 acres at Quinnipiac last December, including the field near the entrance and the quad and athletic fields. He used the recommended gallon to one gallon per acre, depending on bird activity. "The geese left the treated areas almost as soon as the product dried on the grass," says Lynch.

Savings in maintenance of the quad alone make a difference to the school, eliminating the need for employees to clean goose droppings from sidewalks and grassy areas with leaf blowers three times a day. The college also saves on potential costs of renovating goose-damaged turf areas by preventing the problem in the first place, says Lynch. "If Heritage had to renovate the turf in the quad area, for example, the cost would range from \$860 an acre to \$1,100 an acre and would require our attention twice a year," he adds.

Conditioning system

Heritage achieved similar results at a corporate park managed by Griffen Land Resources in Windsor, CT. The office park is just under 10 acres, has waterways, and is adjacent to corn and tobacco fields, which

are attractive to Canada geese because they like to eat residual stalks. Lynch says the application of the new repellent drove the geese to the far side of the pond. Heritage will continue treating the turf until the geese are conditioned to stay out.

A battle in the "Show me" state

In Missouri, a large national car leasing company has been battling geese on its office grounds in a suburb of St. Louis.

About 20 Canada geese moved in to feed

continued on page 92

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Circle 140

continued from page 91

and roost on land at the company's headquarters in a 6-acre park with a manmade lake and stream. For months, the geese chowed down on the grass, left feces all over sidewalks and became aggressive with company employees.

Top Care Inc., a full-service landscape and lawn care company serving commercial and residential customers in Missouri, Illinois and Kansas, came to the rescue with the same product used at Quinnipiac. The firm applied the repellent last summer. After the first application, birds began to leave for other feeding areas almost immediately, returning only to roost and loaf. Some birds settled on the south side of the bottom lake. After the second application, all the geese moved to parking islands. One day after the second application, all geese



Grass treated with the product under normal light.

left the property to feed in other areas.

"The customer decided the product worked, so we made a third application," says Top Care operations manager Mike King. "Days after the last application, there were no birds on the property or in the general area.

"More importantly, we helped the company reduce the cost of clean up and im-



Same grass under ultraviolet light as the geese see it.

prove the aesthetics of the property. Now, employees can enjoy the patio area for lunch. Meanwhile, we've generated a new revenue stream by helping it and other clients deal with the birds in a humane way," King notes.

For more information, contact EBI at 800/468-6324 or the Web site: www.flightcontrol.com

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products

TECH CENTER

Compact wheel loaders

Like Komatsu's backhoe loaders, these wheel loaders feature the HydraMind system for feel and control. The cab enhances operator visibility and comfort through an ergonomic design. Five models range from 9,530 lbs. to 12,830 lbs., 29 hp. to 74 hp. and bucket capacities of .52 cu. yd. to 2.1 cu. yd.

For more information contact Komatsu at 847/970-5891 / circle no. 250

Quick irrigation coupler

Rain Bird has designed its new Residential Quick Coupler to give an inexpensive, convenient way of hand-watering hard-to-reach spaces like the area near the end of a driveway or landscaped beds. Each Quick Coupler kit contains: polypropylene valve, swivel elbow with male threads, "turn and lock" key with ribbed grip that can handle up to 125 psi of air and water pressure, triple swing joint with O-rings seal and a stainless steel clamp for staking the valve.

For more information contact Rain Bird at 626/812-3400, check out the website www.rainbird.com / circle no. 251

High-production mowing

Three new compact front mowers from New Holland are designed for greater productivity with more power, maneuverability and operator comfort. Ranging from 22 to 35 hp, all models feature a diesel engine, two-range hydrostatic transmission, multi-disc independent PTO clutch and wet disc brakes. A low center of gravity makes the mowers more stable, and a 13.3-gal. fuel tank allows for all day mowing. A tilt and telescoping steering column, deluxe seat with flip-up arm rests and a power socket for cell phones, radios or CD players provide maximum comfort.

For more information contact New Holland at 717/355-1371 or www.newholland.com/na / circle no. 252

Top notch mowers

A new line of mowers from Ferris Industries, a Simplicity Manufacturing company, includes a 23-hp. mid-mount zero-turn mower called the Stallion; a 20-hp., 3-wheel rider with outfront deck called the Morgan; and a heavy-duty 14-hp. hydrostatic walk-behind called the Pacer.

The Stallion has the Ferris IS independent suspension system and Simplicity Free Floating deck. The Morgan has an electric lift that allows the operator to raise the cutting deck, and can be converted into a snowthrower, snow blade, rotary broom or debris blower. The Pacer has a 36-in. cut and Kohler engine.

For more information contact Simplicity at 262/284-8706 or www.simplicitymfg.com / circle no. 253



Big features for big loaders

Gehl's new Avantage mini-loaders come in compact packages but have big loader fea-



tures. As narrow as 33 1/2 in., they're perfect for light construction, landscaping or lawn and turf maintenance. Featuring full-time 4-wheel drive, both the skid-steer and articulated-steering units are available with 20 hp. diesel engines. Attachments include buckets, pallet forks, earth augers, trenchers, hydraulic hammers and mower decks.

For more information contact Gehl at 414/334-9461 or www.gehl.com / circle no. 254

Customized blade length

Fiskars' Sliding Blade Pruning Saw has a 6-in. adjustable blade which slides into the handle, allowing the blade length to be customized to

the branch or angle being worked with. The sliding feature allows for compact and safe storage while the curved shape of the handle keeps the user's wrist in the right position.

For more information contact Fiskars at 800/500-4849 or www.fiskars.com / circle no. 255

For large yards

Swisher's T-60 Trailmower attaches to most any lawn tractor or ATV, the company says, and is powered by either a 13-hp. Enduro Tecumseh OHV or 12.5-hp Briggs & Stratton I/C engine. The mower has a triple-blade cutting deck for a 60-in. finish cut.

For more information contact Swisher at 660/747-8183 or www.swisherinc.com / circle no. 256

Easy riding

Wright Manufacturing says that its Stander mower handles quickly, easily and with less operator fatigue. Pump controls return to neutral automatically. A Grass Gobbler needs no bracket for the wide discharge opening. Deck cover is supported on vibration-isolated posts for quiet operation. A magnetic clutch/brake is designed for the mower's 28-hp engine.

For more information contact Wright at 301/330-0086 / circle no. 257

products

Self-powered wing mowers

Kunz Engineering has come up with a way to turn a standard riding mower into an easy to maneuver mowing machine that it claims will cut from 7 to 16 ft. wide by pulling one, two or three Acrease wing mowers. They can be pulled behind mid-deck riding mowers, 4-wheel steer riding mowers, small tractors without mowers, utility vehicles, 4-wheelers and zero-turn mowers.

For more information contact Kunz Engineering at 815/539-6954 / circle no. 258

Tough plow

The Snow Wolf Pro Series plows are made for 20+ hp. compact utility tractors, smaller skid



steers or 20 to 60 hp. skid steers for efficient, standard duty. The distinguishing feature is a floating blade that allows semi-down pressure — putting weight onto the blade to increase the scraping ability. And, since the plow floats on a solid steel link and an industrial compression spring, the plow is stopped from contacting the operator's cab. It comes in 5- to 8-in. widths and power angles to 31° left and right

For more information contact Snow Wolf at 800/905-2265 / circle no. 259

3-D maps

DeLorme has a solution for professionals who are frustrated by maps with overlapping coverage areas: 3-D Topo Quads. These provide seamless USGS maps of entire states in a CD-ROM format and enable users to view any region in the state in either 2-D or 3-D and print out customized maps of any region. The product is also compatible with GPS receivers and handheld computers. The maps include 3-D

modeling of areas, land cover and draw tools.

Contact DeLorme at 207/846-7000 or www.delorme.com / circle no. 260

Spread the word

Gandy's two sizes of broadcast spreaders in push and tractor-tow models have 50- and 100-lb. capacity hoppers supported by an epoxy-coated carriage with pneumatic tires. All models have molded nylon and stainless steel metering components and an enclosed gearbox. The broadcast metering system has flow direction closures on the hopper bottom to reduce flow to right or left.

For more information contact Gandy at 800/443-2476 or www.gandy.net / circle no. 261

Blowing it all away

Little Wonder has outfitted its High-Output blowers with new features like a strengthened back panel with deeper ribs to cut down on vibration and commercial grade five hardware for trouble-free performance. Test results show the 8-hp. blower easily moves a 52-lb. cart up to the top of a 12-ft. ramp. That's because the blower has a centrifugal blower design that works together with a backward-inclined blade impeller. The blowers also have a height-adjustable handle and a variable throttle control that can be mounted on the left or right.

For more information contact Little Wonder at 215/357-8045 / circle no. 262

Sucking it up

The Trac Vac provides for more efficient mowing, Palmor Products says, by sucking up grass clippings as you go. Model 652 has a 16-bushel capacity with a 5-hp. Briggs & Stratton engine. Model 865, developed for estate-size grounds, has an 8-hp. blower assembly mounted directly to its side. Model 1060, developed for zero-turns with decks large than 62 in. has an 11-hp. Briggs & Stratton engine and a 50-bushel cart. Model 470, a walk-behind, has an 8-in. intake hose.

For more information contact Palmor Products at 800/872-2822 or www.trac-vac.com / circle no. 263

Truck loader with bite

Bear Cat has come out with some new towable truck loaders to complement its chippers, chipper/shredders, yard vacuums, stump grinders, PTO blowers and wheeled string trimmers. These new loaders feature 20- or 25-hp. Kohler engines; 12-in., 10-ft. long flex hose; one-bolt manifold removal for easy blade cleanout; swivel boom with hose storage; rotating diameter discharge tube; 15-in. tires; adjustable croft hitch.

For more information contact Bear Cat at 800/247-7335 or www.bearcatproducts.com / circle no. 264

Dispatching made efficient

A new software package combining Millennium Solutions' software for Green Industry contractors and Lavelle Engineering Technologies' OnSite Dispatch software promises to give companies 20 to 30% productivity gains. The way it works is simple: Job information which is taken and entered at the central office can be seamlessly transferred into the Millennium software at the contractor's office, then sent to the field over the Internet and wireless networks. From the field, the job's status and completion can be directly entered to update the central office. This eliminates duplicate data entry and the need for phone contact.

For more information contact Millennium Solutions at 317/585-6100 or www.millenniums.com / circle no. 265

Converting in a snap

Five new Stihl interchangeable gearboxes allow operators to convert certain Stihl units from one application to another, increasing their efficiency in multiple tool applications. Attachments include a pole pruner, power scythe and three hedge trimmers (0° fixed, 30° fixed and zero-90° degrees adjustable). All five attachments are recommended for Stihl units FH 75, FS 85, HT 70, HT 75, HL 75K (fixed), HL 75 (30°), HL 75K (0°-90°) and HL 75 (0°-90°) only.

For more information contact Stihl at 1-800-GO-STIHL or www.stihlusa.com / circle no. 266

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March 2000

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- 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?**
 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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MANAGEMENT**

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MANAGEMENT
March 2000**

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- 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) _____

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- 22 355 Extension Agents/Consultants for Horticulture
- 23 360 Sod Growers, Turf Seed Growers & Nurseries
- 24 365 Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers
- 25 370 Manufacturers
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- 42 C Tree Care
- 43 D Turf Aeration
- 44 E Irrigation Services
- 45 F Turf Fertilization
- 46 G Turf Disease Control
- 47 H Ornamental Care
- 48 I Landscape Design
- 49 J Turf Weed Control
- 50 K Paving, Deck & Patio Installation
- 51 L Pond/Lake Care
- 52 M Landscape Installation
- 53 N Snow Removal
- 54 O Other (please specify) _____

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- 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

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105	117	129	141	153	165	177	189	201	213	225	237	249	261	273	285	297	309
106	118	130	142	154	166	178	190	202	214	226	238	250	262	274	286	298	310
107	119	131	143	155	167	179	191	203	215	227	239	251	263	275	287	299	311
108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192	204	216	228	240	252	264	276	288	300	312
109	121	133	145	157	169	181	193	205	217	229	241	253	265	277	289	301	313
110	122	134	146	158	170	182	194	206	218	230	242	254	266	278	290	302	314
111	123	135	147	159	171	183	195	207	219	231	243	255	267	279	291	303	315
112	124	136	148	160	172	184	196	208	220	232	244	256	268	280	292	304	316

Welcome additions

Mower attachments may be the answer to boosting your bottom line, not to mention saving time and reducing worker exhaustion

Anyone who relies on mowers to make a living knows that accessories are as important as the mower itself. You expect that whatever you attach, whether it be a plow, rake, snow thrower or broom, it will perform as well or exceed the job that the mower does on grass. You also expect that the accessories will reduce your labor costs and save you time. Accessories might as well stay locked in your maintenance barn if they don't do those things.

Robert Underwood of Underwood Bros. Landscape, Phoenix, AZ, sees solid equipment with quality accessories as a profit tool. "The more innovative you can be with attachments, the more profit you can make," Underwood says. "People don't like to spend money on attachments, but if they look at the long-term benefits, they're better off."

Underwood gets the most use out of a fertilizer spreader and vacuum units with hydraulic dumps.



◀ Ferris Industries' ProCut 22 has accessories such as a snow blower, rotary broom and a debris blower. Call 800/933-6175 or circle no. 295

◀ (far left) Adding attachments to MTD's 2000 Yard-Man requires no tools. Call 330/273-4550 or circle no. 296



"We've built our dump trucks where our vacuum units can back up to them and dump grass in them, thereby saving us from having to handle the grass twice," he says. "A lot of mowers are going to mulching decks, which we use, but certain clients require that we pick up our clippings."

When shopping for spreaders, Underwood looks for one thing: durability. "Spreaders need to be pretty sturdy because they're hanging off the back of the mower and not always on level terrain. You also like to have something that can hold several hundred pounds of fertilizer so you don't have to keep going back to your source."



▲ Slice through dense, wet undergrowth with Gehl's two new swing-frame mower conditioners. Call 262/334-9461 or circle no. 297



◀ Harley's Power Box Rake® lets you expand your turf maintenance business into landscape construction. Call 800/437-9779 or circle no. 298

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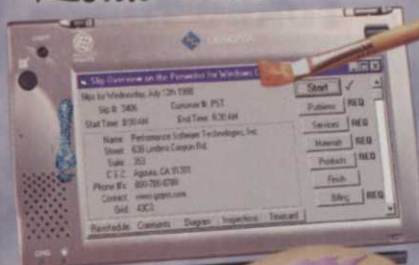
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Fax or e-mail resume to

Katy Kelly - Human Resource Manager
Lipinski Landscape & Irrigation, Inc.
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Fax: 856-234-0206. E-mail: katy@lipinskiland.com

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\$37,873-\$53,786/ANNUALLY Serves as chief supervisor for park operations and maintenance in the administration of the Parks & Recreation Division of the Public Works Department. Responsible for planning, supervising and overseeing the operations of park maintenance, tree and weed abatement and public cemeteries within the division. Coordinates day-to-day work activities of all employees within park operations, handles inquiries from the public, prepares annual budget and capital improvement requests, and advises Parks Director concerning present and long-range strategic planning and development efforts. Necessary to have extensive current knowledge of methods, practices and equipment related to park/facility maintenance, construction and turf care and customer service. Considerable experience in park maintenance with some experience at the supervisory level; completion of standard high school course or equivalent, preferably graduation from a college or university with major course work in parks and recreation administration; environmental education, or agronomy; preferable status as a Certified Leisure Professional (CLP); or any equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities. An understanding of recreation management is also preferred. Applications are being taken until April 7, 2000. For an application please call City of Sioux City, Human Resources, 712-279-6202 or kwynn@sioux-city.org AA/EEO 3/00

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Help Wanted (Cont'd)

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ALASKA: Nursery Manager- A successful, aggressive company in Anchorage, Alaska is seeking an energetic, self-motivated, honest, flexible individual to join our team. Must have horticultural knowledge and be familiar with ornamental pest. Needs to be able to instruct and supervise daily work activities and maintain a large nursery. Needs to be able to greet the public and have strong sales skills. Possibly a year round position. Health insurance available. **Send Resumes to: Evergreen Landscaping Inc., 205 East Dimond Blvd. #150, Anchorage, AK 99515 4/00**

GROUNDS CARE MANAGER- needed for a 1,703 unit, 95 acre historical residential community in Arlington, Virginia. Candidates must have as a minimum a B.S. Degree in Horticulture or related academic field. Minimum of one year experience in community landscape management. Property has landscape/turfed grounds with a large number of mature trees. Prospective candidate must have excellent communication skills, good mathematical skills and display sound judgement. It is desired that candidates be familiar with CAD and be a certified integrated pest management chemical applicator. Bilingual (Spanish) and additional certifications or licenses a plus. We are looking for a person who has sound landscape management/supervisory skills, but is also willing to get their hands dirty. Excellent pay and benefits. **Qualified candidates can fax resumes to the General Manager at: 703-379-1451. EOE 3/00**

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LANDSCAPE DESIGN/INSTALL MANAGER- Memphis firm with reputation for exceptional quality working with high profile clients is seeking experienced manager for design/installation division. Must have strong design talent, experience in commercial and residential landscaping, organization and communication skills. Bottom line responsibility for entire design process from generation of proposal through completion of installation. A salaried career opportunity with production bonuses, health/life insurance, profit sharing (401k). **Contact: Margie Hill at 901-382-9000 or fax resume: 901-382-7797. 3/00**

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cleanup crew

THIS AND THAT

Weed-whacked at an early age

BY JASON STAHL



The guy told me that the thing hovered above the ground like a flying saucer. And I believed him.

But who can blame me? When I joined a parks grounds maintenance crew, I was a

college kid. So when my manager kidded that the hovering mower I was about to use glided two feet from the ground, all I could say was, "Wow."

Yeah, effortlessly my grass-stained ca-boose. I busted my arms dragging that thing all over a 70° slope that had more rocks and tree stumps on it than blades of grass. At the end of the day, when the sides of my feet were blistered from trying to keep my balance on that death hill, I found out that the job I had just completed was one of the most feared projects at the park and one almost always assigned to rookies.

Push mower duty was hell, too. Zipping from grass island to grass island in the Cushman, we'd have to load and unload the heavy mowers. Then there was the railroad trestle. Underneath it were two U-shaped grass mounds, and to mow them we had to lower the mower down and haul it back up again. There was more gravel than grass on the other side, and the poor sap who mowed that side always got a mouthful of rocks for his efforts...*(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

ALCA member survey statistics

Hourly wages in 1997 (most recent survey; 1999 data will be available spring 2000)

beginning laborer, exterior maintenance\$6/ hr
experienced laborer, exterior maintenance\$7.50-\$8/ hr
beginning laborer, exterior design/build\$6 - \$6.50/ hr
experienced laborer, exterior design/build\$8 - \$8.25/ hr

By region:

	NE	SE	MidW	NW	SW	Far W
beginning laborer	\$7	\$6	\$6	\$6	\$5.50	\$6
experienced laborer	\$9	\$8	\$8	\$8	\$6	\$8.5

Source: ALCA



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