

# cleanup crew

THIS AND THAT

## Watch out, Disney World?

**H**ave you ever seen something and said, "Now I've seen it all." Well, you haven't seen everything just yet, at least not until you plant your eyes on a new theme park of trees (yes, trees) called Bonfante Gardens in Gilroy, CA. Michael Bonfante, former president of a chain of supermarkets with sales of \$375 million in 1997, sold the chain and financed the park, fulfilling his passion for trees and horticulture. One of the things visitors can see at Bonfante's park is a collection of 25 trees salvaged from the "Tree Circus" seen in Ripley's Believe It Or Not in the 1940s and '50s. These aren't just any trees — the trunks are shaped like hearts, lightning bolts, basket weaves and rings thanks to a grafting technique mastered by "Tree Circus" creator Axel Erlandson. But don't worry, if you're really not enraptured at the prospect of looking at trees all day, there's also 40 rides and other attractions to choose from. Who knows, maybe Bonfante will give Walt Disney a run for his money.



Visitors can check out other attractions like these go-karts at Bonfante Gardens.



Pictured below is the famous basket tree seen in Ripley's Believe It Or Not.

## Family matters...

**T**here's no better example of family working together than the one Mike Hugg, Director of Landscape Services for MetroNational, described last month for our monthly *Landscape Management* golf shirt giveaway.

In 1980, Hugg was hired at MetroNational, a property development/investment management corporation in Houston, TX, to create an in-house landscape department. His first three employees were Mexican cousins with the last name of Razo loaned to him from the company's con-

struction division. Soon, he added five more employees, all named Razo from the same village of Salamanca in Guanajato. Today, out of a staff of 80 employees, 38 are Razo relations — fathers, sons, brothers, cousins and in-laws from three or four villages around Salamanca. There's also a husband and wife team by the name of Belmonte from another part of Mexico on the staff, as well as Mrs. Belmonte's sister and Mr. Belmonte's brother. "For over twenty years, this working family has been the heart and soul of our organization," Hugg says. Apparently, it's paid off — according to Hugg, his department has won over 20 awards at the local, state and national level.

## Your pickiest customer?

Another *Landscape Management* "designer" golf shirt's up for grabs if you can tell us (in 200 words or less) the best story about the most demanding customer you ever had. We'll pick the best story, and you might even see it in print if you win.

Entries are due by May 15, 2001.

Send your submissions via e-mail to [jstahl@advanstar.com](mailto:jstahl@advanstar.com) or snail mail to: Landscape Management, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Middleburg Heights, OH 44130.

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