

cleanup crew

THIS AND THAT

Yuuuummy

Imagine getting this call: "Yeah, I'd like to order one thousand linear feet of hibiscus, a ton of leafy ficus branches and a truckload of eugenia. Oh yeah, and 100 gallons of spring water to wash it down with."

The call is from the San Diego Zoo to San Diego, CA-based Miramar Wholesale Nurseries. The plant material is not going to be used to decorate the grounds but feed, and entertain, the animals. Not only do the giraffes, rhinos, gorillas, etc. find the stuff tasty, they also like to play with it. In fact, it's part of their behavioral enrichment program. This plant material stimulates the animals' minds and pleases their palates.

Of course, all of this "play food" spells big bucks for Miramar, one of the largest commercial landscape centers in southern California.



Excess supervision

Jim Creager of Natural Lawn has had about enough of his pickiest customer, a local elected judge who's also — get this — his relative!

One day, the judge called him and asked him to mow his lawn. He was in court that day, so it was his wife who gave Creager a tour of their property. It was a nice-sized home on two lots with several beds, a couple of brush piles, an old dog pen and a vegetable garden. The problem started the next time Creager visited, because the judge's wife once again showed him the whole property and detailed what to mow and what not to mow. In

fact, every time he shows up, she gives him the same rundown.

"She feels the need to tell me everything that needs to be done as if I'm a moron," Creager says.

Plus, he's been told that the beds must never have a single leaf in them, and they call as late as 11 p.m. to see if he's coming the next day.

"You should have seen the look on her face when I unloaded my new Z mower last year," Creager says. "She said, 'You're not going to mow my lawn with that thing, are you?' I've tried twice to get rid of them but they just keep calling."

THOSE DARN CRITTERS

What's the nastiest critter you've ever come up against while on the job? Tell us in 200 words or less and you might win one of our golf shirts, which are going fast. We'll pick the best story, and you might even see it in print if you win. Entries are due by July 15, 2001. Send your submissions via e-mail to jstahl@advanstar.com or snail mail to: Landscape Management, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Middleburg Heights, OH 44130.

For his story, we salute Jim with a "Landscape Management" golf shirt.

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