

industry almanac

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Leadership Jam fuels hi-octane networking

BY RON HALL /
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CHARLOTTE, NC — NASCAR Race Week here pulsates with noise, commerce and color. Faces are red with excitement. There's whooping. Back slapping. Spirited conversation. And new friends.

Whoa, partner. We haven't even gotten to the race yet. That up-your-tailpipe extravaganza (with the winner taking home a cool \$1 million in front of 180,000 frenzied fans) blasted off later.

The hi-octane energy I'm referring to actually began 13 hours before the race. Sixty landscape and lawn service professionals met in an airy conference room at the American headquarters of Green Industry equipment supplier Husqvarna. These enthusiastic business owners had earned the right to gather for this final round of networking and brainstorming as the result of sending their supervisors, foremen, or managers to one of the JP Horizons Inc. programs known as Leadership

Jams. Husqvarna and *Landscape Management* magazine are the co-sponsors of Leadership Jams. The program has the endorsement of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA).

The morning began with consultant Jim Paluch of JP Horizons, Inc. (www.jp-horizons.com) "energizing" the landscapers plus several key people from Husqvarna and ALCA (www.alca.org).

Settled around several rows of round tables, the business owners and guests networked in a rapid-fire exchange of ideas



Clockwise from top left: Bruce Moore and Mike Leuders check out a model store at Husqvarna's headquarters. President David Zerfoss (left) chats with NASCAR team owner Joe Gibbs. Michael Hatcher (left) and Husky's Mark Michaels.



and business experiences. Topics included:

- ▶ creating a compelling vision that inspires the team,
- ▶ defining processes that develop leadership skills of key people in a company,
- ▶ providing consistent and innovative training that enhances technical skills and personal growth, and
- ▶ creating a focus on sales through a commitment to customer service.

That was an ambitious program for a single morning of brainstorming, but the ideas and suggestions came hot and heavy,

and people were scribbling notes. JP Horizons staff members collected all of the suggestions, and will distribute them to all the participants.

While the landscapers took to the roundtable discussions with unbridled enthusiasm, they attacked Lowe's Motor Speedway with even more gusto, thanks to host Husqvarna (www.husqvarna.com), which made its suite available to landscapers for the Winston Cup race. From garage and pit tours to meeting the drivers, Husqvarna designed an unforgettable JP Horizons event.

For additional information and photos from the special Leadership Jams/Husqvarna event visit LM's Web site at www.landscapemanagement.net.

Snow business — it's 'beautiful'

BY RON HALL /
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ERIE, PA — "Beautiful, just beautiful."

Snow king John Allin was describing this past winter's snow season on Lake Erie's far southeastern shore and what it meant to the Allin Companies' bottom line. That's just what 84 guests (most of them landscapers) came to hear — specifically how to make money removing snow and ice.

They came to the right place because Allin is the industry's acknowledged snow removal leader. The 84 visitors were among the 300 people participating in four regional training sessions offered by the Snow & Ice Management Association (SIMA) this spring.

Allin is the founder and longtime President of SIMA. He now splits his time between running his \$2.8 million landscape company, growing his national snow empire and teaching others how to operate



The Allin Companies hosted a spring SIMA seminar. John Allin (inset) explained SMG.

profitable snow/ice management businesses.

SMG on a roll

This exhausting schedule seems to suit Allin, whose ambitions long ago outgrew Erie. His Snow Management Group (SMG), a wholly owned subsidiary of The Allin Companies, operated in 25 states this past winter and generated \$40 million in snow revenues.

Allin says he keeps this saying foremost in his mind: "If you think you can, or if you

think you can't — you're right." Obviously, he thinks he can. That's saying

something for a guy whose first attempt at business was running a pair of pizza shops as a student at Gannon College.

Following a three-hour presentation at a nearby hotel, *Landscape Management* and the other 80 visitors at the SIMA event toured Allin's headquarters and the building across the street that he and his staff are preparing for SMG. There will



be 60 to 65 employees in the new building who will be managing its 24/7 call and nerve center. It'll be ready in June, says Allin.

While Erie, PA, might seem like a strange location for a company with a growing national footprint, it's actually one of the best training grounds in the United States for snow removal. Erie (population 275,000) gets lots of snow every winter.

This past season, 146 inches of snow fell on the city center, but more than 200 inches of snow were measured on the busy higher cor-

ridor on the city's south end due to a 600-ft. rise in elevation from the lakeshore to the heavily developed area surrounding the I-90 interchanges.

"When I see a lot of pavement, that's what excites me," says Allin. "Beautiful."

For more information about snow removal and its opportunities, visit the Web site www.sima.org.

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Circle 108

People & companies



Reinders Inc. appointed **John Jensen** Territory Manager in

the company's Turf Division.

Rain Bird Corporation promoted **Donn Mann** to Regional Sales Manager for the Midwest region and **Dan Puthuff**

to Regional Sales Manager for the Southwest region.

Chapel Valley Landscape Company promoted **Bill Benoit** to Maryland Regional Manager and **Michael Holland** to Maryland Commercial Sales Manager.

Bayer Environmental



Science promoted **Bryan Gooch** to Program

Manager for the Chipco Professional Products Division.

Seed Research of Oregon hired **Nancy Junk** as a Regional Sales Manager.

The Scotts Company was named "supplier of the year" by Wal-Mart in lawn & garden category.

[CLIPPINGS]

Girard wins big landscape contract

SANFORD, FL — Girard Environmental Services was awarded a five-year, \$3 million-plus landscape contract by the Heathrow Master Association to perform landscape management services throughout the Seminole County community of Heathrow. The Sanford-based firm, which had revenues of more than \$7.6 million last year and projects revenues of more than \$10 million in 2003, currently provides landscape management services throughout Orange, Seminole, Brevard, Lake and Volusia Counties.

TPI takes flight July 22-25

DAYTON, OH — Ohio's Centennial of Flight Celebration is the theme of the Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) Summer Convention & Field Days being held near Dayton, OH, July 22-25. Green Velvet Sod Farms in nearby Bellbrook, OH, is this year's host. Complete conference details are available online at www.TurfGrassSod.org. Click on "Events" to access the information or call TPI at 800/405-8873.

NFL Ravens bail on grass

BALTIMORE, MD — The NFL Baltimore Ravens, who have played on a real grass field since their founding in the mid-1990s, selected the Momentum Turf System for its stadium and practice facility fields. Momentum is a synthetic sand-and-rubber infill system marketed by Sportex. The Ravens will play on its new stadium field for its first home pre-season game versus Buffalo on August 9.

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Circle 109

Boomers want fewer hassles

NAHB study good news to Green Industry

WASHINGTON DC — Hurray for the baby boomers! That's what all of us in the landscape and lawn services industry should be shouting from the rooftops every morning when we hop out of bed. Why?

A recent study by the National Association of Home Builders (www.nahb.org) and Countrywide Home Loans reinforces what many of us have realized for a long time — that baby boomers have lots of spending power and they want a maintenance-free lifestyle. And who best to help them achieve this? Us.

"Baby boomers and older home buyers want a maintenance-free lifestyle, freeing them up to travel, socialize and pursue the active lifestyles they want to lead," says Kent Conine, President of NAHB and a home and apartment builder from Dallas. "At the same time, the study dispels the common perception that seniors prefer to move to traditional warm-weather retirement destinations like their parents did. An overwhelming majority of seniors want to live near their loved ones or in the communities where they've put down roots."

Some of the findings of the study include:

► More than half the builders in the 50-plus market are building single-family detached homes in 2003.

► About half of the builders built 50-plus senior communities in close-in sub-

urbs and one-fourth in outer suburbs.

► About two-thirds of builders reported

that their customers were relocating from the same community or the same state.

► Builders note that customers prefer homes that promote safety and security.

For more info on the study, contact

Donna Reichle at dreichle@nahb.com.

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We need your information and opinions for our 2003 State of the Industry report. Fill out our short online survey and be eligible to win valuable prizes such as a DVD player or an "official" Landscape Management shirt. Visit our Web site at www.landscapemanagement.net.

Circle 110