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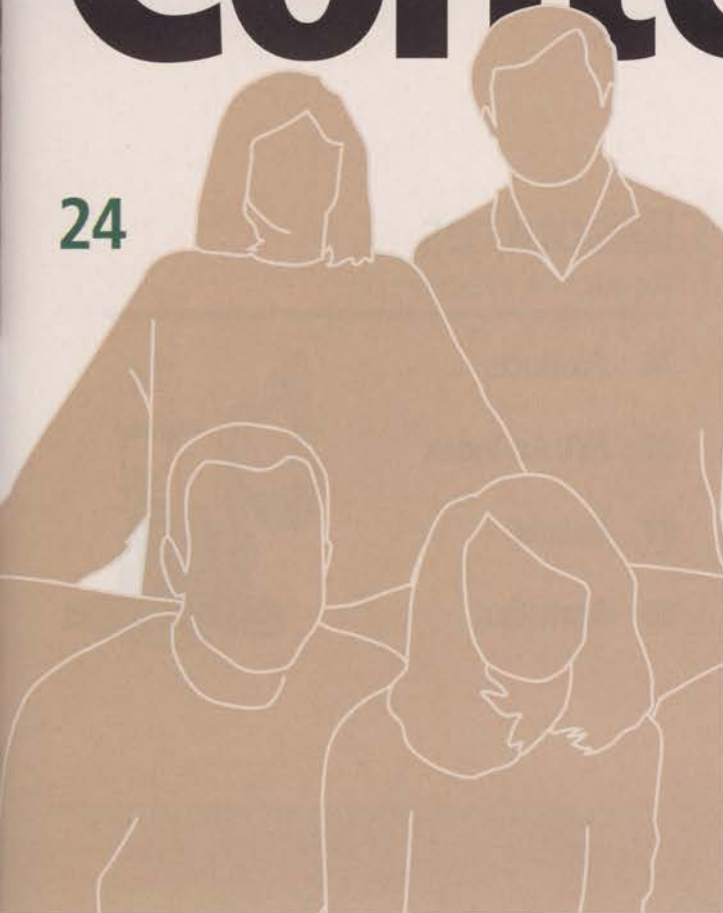




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### Sound Engineering

Simply put, the Walker Mower was designed to do a job and not just fill a market. No product studies were used and teams of engineers were not part of the inception. The innovative, time-tested design of the Walker is the result of years of improvement by listening to customers and implementing various industry advancements. Key to this elegant design has been discipline and staying true to the original idea—the current Walker chassis is within inches of the original overall size, even with larger, more advanced engines. Simple, practical construction of the Walker has made it a distinguished original.



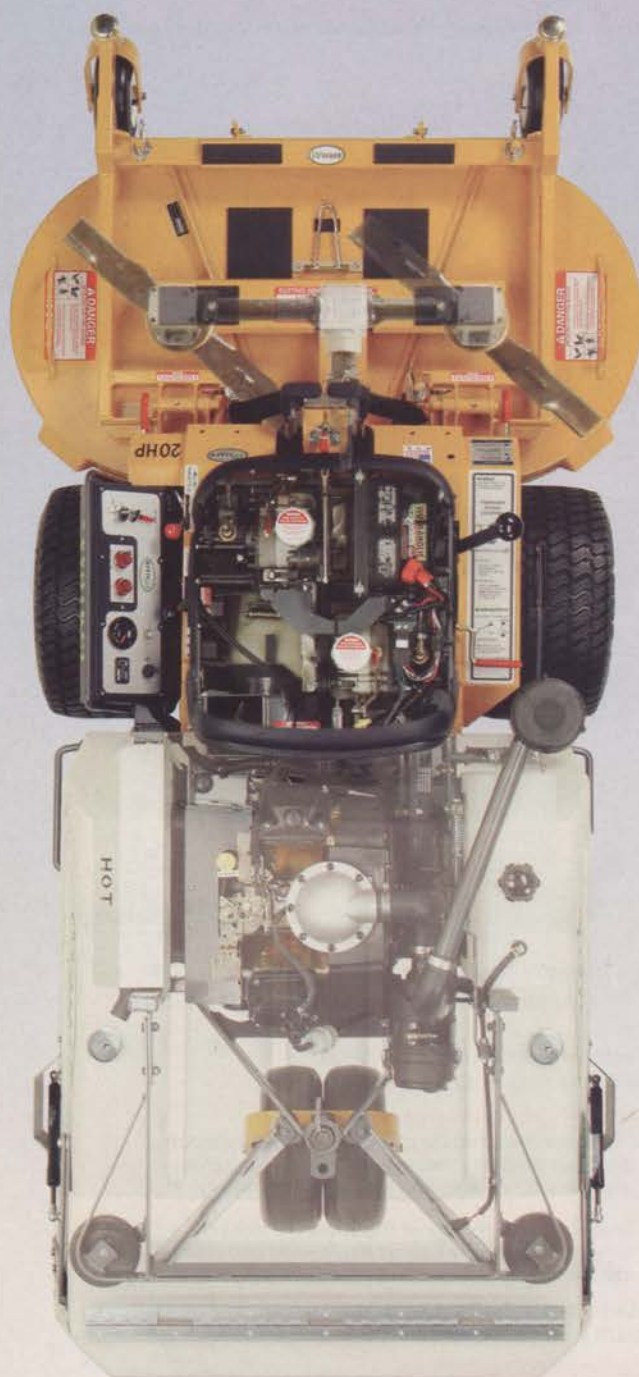
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## Service beyond 'just a job'

BY RON HALL / Editor-in-Chief

**M** eet Harold. He understands the meaning of service — willing, cheerful service. He's an example that we're all here for one reason, as well: to serve.

I met Harold for maybe 15 minutes in August. I'll probably never meet him again, but I don't think I'll ever forget him. His work begins daily in the predawn hours at Atlanta Hartsfield Airport.

### There goes the bus

"Oh crap," I said to myself as I got off the elevator for an early morning flight. Road-weary and dispirited because of this or that niggling problem (inconsequential stuff as it almost always turns out to be), I witnessed the hotel shuttle pulling away from the hotel in a curtain of rain that darkened my mood even more. I missed my ride, and possibly my flight.

With no enthusiasm, I asked the attractive young desk clerk if she could contact the shuttle whose taillights, reflecting off the rain-slick road, grew smaller in the distance. "Of course," she responded unexpectedly, flashing a bright smile. My mood lightened...a little.

### Harold to the rescue

As I peered through the soggy remnants of the hurricane that flattened Florida the previous day, I watched the shuttle turn and head back. Within two minutes, the driver (his name tag said Harold) popped out of the

van with a huge smile and, with one big hand to my elbow and the other grabbing my bag over my protests, herded me onto the shuttle with a booming, "Five minutes to the airport, sir, five minutes."

Buckling up, Harold reached his big hand into a cooler behind his seat and pulled out a bottle of Dasani water. "Ice cold water, sir?" he asked with what seemed like genuine sincerity. My mood ticked up yet another degree.

The traffic was whipping around and tangled just like the weather, but Harold was seemingly unfazed, cheerful even, humming to himself in the dark. Curious, I moved closer to him and asked, "Harold, how long have you been driving this shuttle?"

"Eighteen years, sir," he responded in a friendly voice. Eighteen years, going back and forth.

I ventured another question. "Do you like driving the shuttle?"

He was silent for perhaps five of six seconds. Then, he gently stopped the van, turned in his seat to face me, and said with a smile larger than the van's windshield and one that lit up that dark, soggy morning: "Sir, I love everything that I do."

Then he added, "Sir, I will have you to the gate in two more minutes."

He did, and I made my flight. I won't forget his willingness to go the extra mile on a stranger's behalf.

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I won't forget his willingness to go the extra mile on a stranger's behalf.



Harold's all about service with a smile.





As long as the gross margins are good, you can add customers without adding overhead and watch much of that gross margin fall to the bottom line.



## Growth: good or bad?

BY BRUCE WILSON

**I**n what ways does growth help profitability? Growth can help your profitability by adding necessary gross margin to cover overhead. As long as the gross margins are good, you can add customers without adding overhead and watch as much of that gross margin falls to the bottom line. If you have good information about your profitable customers, you can target growth with predominately high profit ones. I define profitable customers as those

who allow you a fair margin and also give you a fair amount of enhancement work.

In what ways can growth hurt profitability? Growth hurts profitability if you acquire bad customers. It also can hurt profitability if the growth is unplanned and stresses out the operational capabilities. The work then gets done in an unorganized way, necessitating unplanned overtime.

You can also hurt profitability by adding work from customers who aren't profitable. For instance, some companies know their sweet spot by size or customer type. If you don't know this,

you're taking a shot in the dark as to whether or not you're adding profitable customers.

How can you minimize those factors that can hurt profitability?

- ▶ Plan to grow profitably.
- ▶ Make sure that you have the people in place who can handle the growth you're targeting. Not having the right people is a recipe for failure.
- ▶ Track individual job costs so that you can categorize your profitable customers by type and size on a fact-based basis.
- ▶ Develop a mindset that resists adding overhead as you grow. Make the right decisions based on need. Successful companies do a great job of keeping overhead below industry averages as a percent of sales.
- ▶ Beware of getting too spread out. Lack of density in maintenance contracts greatly increases travel time, cost of management and cost of maintaining high quality and customer service experiences.
- ▶ Don't take on too much work that strains your operation too fast and causes loss of other contracts.

If you limit growth to maintain high profits, how can that hurt your business? The biggest risk here is that you lose all sales momentum and then, if you suffer a loss in work, you lose overhead coverage. Since you have no sales pipeline, your reduced profits erode earnings and could erode balance sheet gains. It usually takes months to rebuild the sales pipeline.

Another downside is that you may lose good employees who don't see opportunities for personal growth.

— *The author is a partner with entrepreneur Tom Oyler in the Wilson-Oyler Group, which offers consulting services. He is also the Director for the Symbiot Landscape Network. Visit [www.wilson-oyler.com](http://www.wilson-oyler.com).*





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# In the Know

BUSINESS NEWS YOU CAN USE

## 'Grizzly' Green Industry encounter

**J**ACKSON HOLE, WY — Three well-known landscape pros, a veteran hunting guide and an enraged female grizzly bear came together in a near-tragic high country confrontation in late September. In the end, the guide was mauled by the bear, but it's likely that his ability to stay cool and the actions of his Green Industry companions saved his life.

Dan Warehime, Vice President of Senske Lawn and Pest Control, Spokane, WA; Tom Tolkacz, President of Swingle Tree, Denver; Steven Tangsrud, former owner of Professional Tree and Turf Equipment, Denver; and hunting guide Wally Cash made up the party. The group had ridden horses into the Teton Wilderness area in the Wyoming mountains and established a hunting camp in a stand of trees near a meadow.

### Not a happy camper

Tolkacz, Warehime and Cash were out hunting on the second day of the season. Cash decided to head back to camp early. He crossed a small ravine and climbed up a small step bank. As he got to the top he encountered a female grizzly and her two cubs. The enraged mom immediately attacked the guide, knocking him to the bottom of the ravine. As he recounted later, she began biting him, mostly on his head which he was trying to protect with his hands.

After the brief but vicious mauling, she lumbered off. Cash says that he remained still for perhaps three minutes, feigning death, then slowly attempted to crawl toward his nearby rifle.

The grizzly, seeing him move, rushed and mauled him a second time. After a short attack, again the bear crashed back



Cash, in the orange vest, is helped to a rescue helicopter by his companions.

into the brush. This time Cash, bleeding and battered, remained motionless for what he believed to be about 10 minutes before he again attempted to crawl to his rifle. This time he made it, and fired a shot.

### Friends to the rescue

Warehime and Tolkacz, hunting on a high ridge above the valley floor, heard the shot and headed in that direction. Warehime and Tolkacz could hear a person calling in the distance. Warehime quickly followed the pleas for help and located Wally.

There, he found Cash bleeding profusely and in shock but still able to tell him what had happened.

He could also hear the momma grizzly stomping and snorting in the nearby brush, not nearly far enough away for comfort.

Warehime cleaned and wrapped Cash's wounds and administered whatever first aid he could. He also contacted Tolkacz via radio, whom immediately contacted the local sheriff via his satellite phone.

Warehime attempted to keep the

guide comfortable until help came. Cash asked him not shoot the bear "unless she comes back after us." Warehime helped Cash out into a open meadow that offered a landing spot for the helicopter. A rescue helicopter dispatched from Idaho Falls, ID, landed in the meadow near the group's camp within the hour. It whisked Cash to a hospital,



where, doctors successfully treated several huge puncture marks above his left eye and skull. A titanium plate had to be inserted to replace missing skull. Multiples pins were placed in his badly torn and broken hand.

### Not over yet

Warehime and Tolkacz continued their hunt and landed an elk. As the elk was being packed out on horses by Tangsrud, he encountered their old acquaintance — the momma grizzly.

The bear charged the horses and, after a swift race — with the horses staying just ahead of the bear — she returned to check on her cubs. Then she charged a second time. Tangsrud contacted Warehime and Tolkacz by radio and informed them their route back to camp was cut off.

After hiking the long way around, Warehime and Tolkacz located Tangsrud and they all went back to camp together safely.



*Sure Thing #1:*

**THE SUN  
WILL RISE  
TOMORROW.**





## People & companies



**The Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA)** announced that

**Debra Holder** has resigned as chief executive officer. In her 25 year tenure, Holder grew ALCA from a small association to a respected powerhouse. She will remain on staff through year-end in a consulting capacity, making sure the transition is as seamless as possible. Tanya Tolpegin, ALCA's chief operating officer, will become the interim CEO, while a nationwide search is conducted for a permanent CEO.

**Komatsu Zenoah's** Strato-Charged engine, which powers many Red-Max products, took the top honor at GaLaBeau

2004, a major European landscape trade show.

**The Tree Care Industry Association** (formerly the National Arborist Association) received a federal grant in the amount of \$197,566 from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

**The Toro Company** elected **Michael J. Hoffman** to the position of President and Chief Operating Officer.

**Autumn Tree Care Experts, Inc.**, appointed **Jim Matkovich** to its team of ISA certified arborists.

**Turfgrass Producers International** announced that Executive Director **Doug Fender** has retired.

**K-Rain Manufacturing Corporation** ("K-Rain") hired **Fredrick "Rick" Hall** as Technical Services Manager.

**Aquatrols** appointed **Patrick "Fuzz" Herridge** as South Central Territory Manager.

**Zaretsky and Associates, Inc.** of Rochester, NY, has been certified as an Official Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

**Toro Irrigation Division** named **Nick Hannappel** marketing manager for residential and commercial products and Steve Stephens Director of Marketing.

**Aquarius Brands** appointed **Gary Bailey** vice president of sales and marketing.

### Take this survey; help your industry

**LAGUNA NIGUEL, CA** — Everybody knows Green Industry consultant Kevin Kehoe is good with the numbers. But now he needs landscape contractors' help to continue to provide good statistical information to help them understand their businesses better. Go to [www.kehoe.biz](http://www.kehoe.biz) and click on Lean Survey. Any questions about the process should be e-mailed to [dlfrost@cox.net](mailto:dlfrost@cox.net).

### DLF starts Green Leaf Landscaping

**VERO BEACH, FL** — DLF International, Inc., a citrus export company, announced the grand opening of Green Leaf Landscaping, Gardening and Nursery, LLC. CEO Douglas Feek stated "We see the growing need to provide professional landscaping and reliable lawn maintenance and gardening services in and around the Vero Beach area." Feek and his management staff at DLF International, Inc., are expected to position Green Leaf as Vero Beach's premier landscape, gardening and nursery.

### Clintar acquires Greenspace

Clintar Groundskeeping Services acquired Greenspace Commercial Services of Oakville, Ontario. Greenspace Commercial was part of Greenspace Services, which included ChemLawn and The Natural Alternative residential services, recently acquired by Barefoot Grass Canada. In the last three years, Clintar has expanded to 15 locations via new franchise development and acquisitions.

*continued on page 20*

## Taiwan battles fire ants

**TAIPEI CITY, TAIWAN** — High-ranking government officials here launched a three-year plan to stop the speedy spread of red imported fire ants.

The fire ants were discovered in the city late this summer. Residents, whose fears have been stoked by sensationalized news accounts of the ants' ferocity, are demanding that the government take action, it was reported in a recent issue of the *Taipei Times* newspaper.

A professor of entomology at Na-

tional Taiwan University is heading a task force that is working with the government to fully eradicate the unwanted invaders. They were introduced to Taiwan in a shipment from their native South America.

In addition to imposing restrictions on the movement of plants and soils, the government is planning an aggressive campaign, including mound and broadcast treatments of infected areas in 19 townships, the news account said.

[CLIPPINGS]



*Sure Thing #2:*

**WATER ROLLS  
OFF A DUCK'S  
BACK.**





## Echo: two-stroke 'alive and well'

**LOUISVILLE, KY** — Don't bury the two-stroke engine. It's alive and well, even in the face of much stricter emissions regulations on the horizon. So said Joe Fahey of power equipment maker Echo, Inc., at a press conference at the recent OPEI Expo here.

Attempting to dispel "confusion" caused in the marketplace by the emissions issue, Fahey insisted that his company's new Power Boost Vortex technology for hand-held power equipment meets and exceeds limits imposed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the U.S. EPA. These regulations, which mandated an 80% reduction in emissions from 2001, take effect Jan. 1, 2005.

"This has been a tremendous challenge for all of us," said Fahey of makers of Class IV engines (displacements of 50cc and under). "EPA and CARB handed manufacturers a puzzle but no clues to solve it."

Meanwhile, he said, rumors have been

circulating that the two-stroke engine is going away. "Confusion abounds and dealers are getting different spins from different manufacturers," he said, and added that end users are getting different stories, too.

"Two stroke ain't dead," he emphatically told a roomful of trade press reporters. Fahey said that Echo has "committed millions of dollars" to develop the third generation of its Power Boost two-stroke technology, which meets emissions regulations. This was done with more precise machining and an engine design that relies upon a single piston ring, which reduces drag and friction.

The result is a cooler running engine with increased acceleration, more power, a cleaner burn and longer life, added Fahey. He said that meeting the emissions regulations was "a tougher path" with two-stroke technology but it was worth it because of its lighter weight, better power-to-weight ratio and ease of maintenance.

## Partnership forms SynaTek

**SOUDERTON, PA** — The Plant Nutrients Division of Moyer & Son and Willar AgriService of Frederick, MD have partnered to form SynaTek, a provider of fertigation, water quality and other products to the golf and turf & ornamental markets. SynaTek's Econtronics equipment line is one of the industry's most advanced systems for dual injection of fertigation and water quality substances.

## Yanmar settles lawsuit

**BUFFALO GROVE, IL** — Yanmar Company, Ltd. of Japan and its IL-based subsidiary, Yanmar America Corp., announced a settlement of a suit involving the alleged illegal importation of used "gray market" Yanmar tractors. The suit was filed against Wallace International Trading Co., Inc. of Anderson, CA, alleging that the company facilitated and brokered the importation of used Yanmar tractors from Japan to the U.S. which were intended for sale and use only within Japan.

CLIPPINGS

## Husqvarna sponsors 2004 Capitol Holiday Tree

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** — Husqvarna will serve as an official sponsor of the 2004 Capitol Holiday Tree, which will decorate the front lawn of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. This is the fifth consecutive year Husqvarna has been chosen as a sponsor for the program. Husqvarna will provide two professional grade chain saws for the tree cutting ceremony as well as safety apparel for the tree felling.

The 70-foot Red Spruce will be cut in Vir-



ginia's George Washington National Forest and will tour 33 communities throughout the state before being delivered via truck to Capitol Hill. Before starting its journey, the tree will be displayed at a send-off ceremony held November 13 in

Highland County. Once in Washington, D.C., the tree will be the centerpiece of an official lighting ceremony, scheduled for December 9, and will be adorned with handmade ornaments from Virginia residents.

"Each year, the Capitol Holiday Tree tradition is a great way to celebrate the beginning of the holiday season," said David Zerfoss, President of Husqvarna. "Husqvarna is proud to be a sponsor and supporter of this outstanding program once again."



*Sure Thing #3:*

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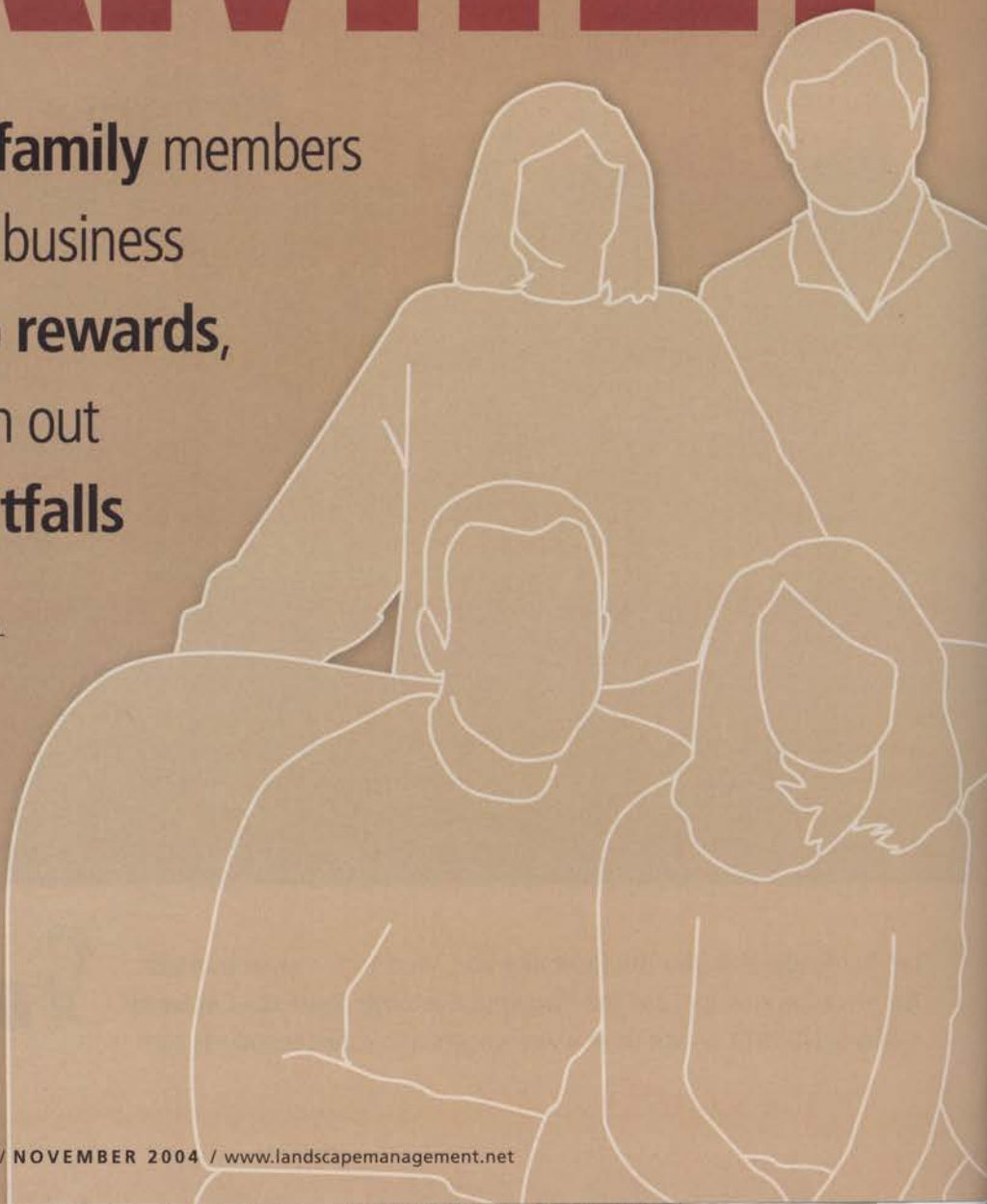




# All in the **FAMILY**

Bringing **family** members  
into your business  
can **reap rewards**,  
but watch out  
for the **pitfalls**

BY GREG MCCONNELL





**D**aryle Johnson is CEO of All American Turf Beauty in Van Meter, IA. He co-founded the company with his wife in 1976. Starting out, he collected no salary and paid his kids half a cent for each advertising flyer they delivered. Today, the company has expanded and his son, Kevin, runs the day-to-day operations.

"It's worked well for nearly 28 years," says Daryle. "The only one that talks back to you is your wife."

But having family members in your business isn't always a laughing matter. While the rewards can be great, the challenges are many and the potential pitfalls deep. If family members in the business have different goals or don't get along, then both the business and the family can be in jeopardy.

Even family businesses that are profitable can have stresses like long hours, arguments, and difficulty separating family life from work life. So, what are some ways that real families are able to succeed in a competitive business environment? Well, for starters, be honest and upfront with each other before making a decision about employment.

### **You better think (before hiring family)**

Before bringing other family members into the business, it's wise to find out if they share your values and understand what their roles and responsibilities will be.

"I think what can be a strength in one family in running a business can be a detriment to another family," says Sally Kujawa, Chief Financial Officer of Kujawa Enterprises, Inc. (KEI) in Oak Creek, WI. "I think you need a very strong agreement on a lot of basics in life. If you don't agree on a philosophy of how to do things — run a business, treat your employees, establish what kind of corporate culture you're going to have — it's going to start interfering."

"I say that from knowing people who have been in business whose philosophies were diametrically opposed, and it did tear both the business and the family apart and things just didn't work out," Kujawa continues. "Fortunately for us, everybody agrees, maybe because we raised the kids with our philosophy."

"I would say it's honesty above all that makes things work," adds Kujawa, who has 23 members of her family in the company. "What roles do you see each family member taking, and will they be able to abide by those roles? And are your egos small enough that it's not going to bother you that maybe a daughter is going to have a more influential position in the company than the son or vice versa?"

Sally's husband, Ron Kujawa, Chairman of the Board at KEI (and semi-retired), says that being happy at what you're doing is most important. You don't want to bring a family member into a business if they won't be content there. "We have our second son who's an institutional stock trader and very, very successful. He's happy at what he's doing. For him to come into our business, oh boy, we'd really have a war. But he's a good father, he's a good husband and he's a wonderful member of our family."

Daryle Johnson credits being selective when choosing which family members to



ILLUSTRATION: JOE KALINOWSKI

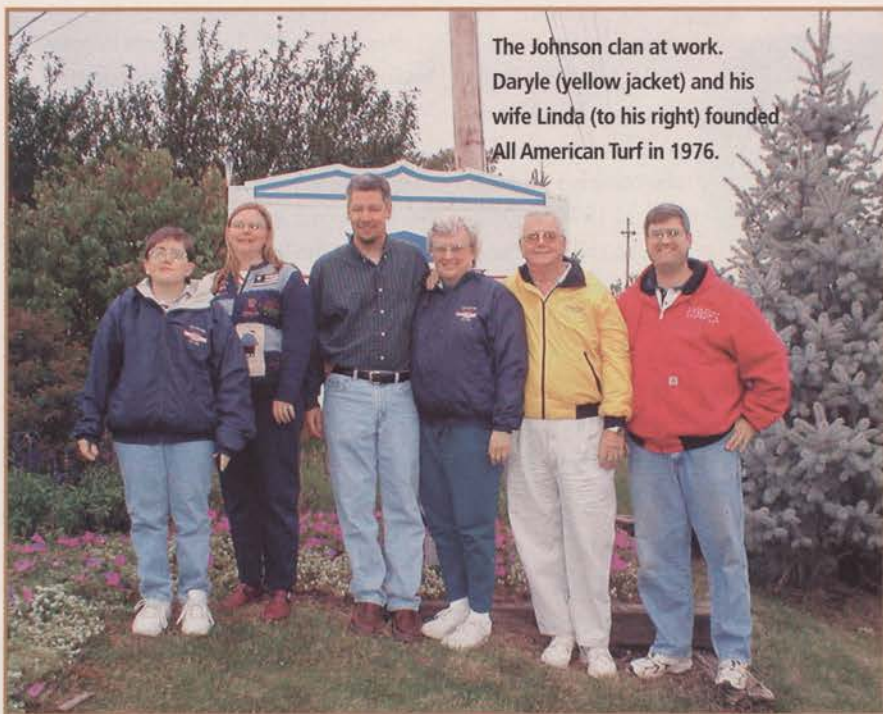


hire as to why he hasn't had any big family feuds within his business. He had many relatives who would have liked a job, but he didn't encourage all of them to apply. In fact, he had to turn a few away.

For the family members that Daryle has hired, he's made sure they all knew the deal right from the start. "They're expected to do their job and, if they don't do their job, they won't have one."

Kevin Johnson, Daryle's son and President of All American Turf Beauty, says his dad didn't require family members to stay in the business either. "There's a couple (immediate family) members who aren't actively involved. Basically, my parents wanted them to do whatever they wanted to do. There was no pressure on anybody to be in the business."

*continued on page 28*



The Johnson clan at work. Daryle (yellow jacket) and his wife Linda (to his right) founded All American Turf in 1976.

## Like father, like daughter

Harry Vignocchi, Chairman of ILT Vignocchi in Wauconda, IL, worked late nights and weekends when he was first building his business. His daughter, Donna Vignocchi, remembers this well because she didn't see him as often as she would have liked. However, she began to spend plenty of time with her father after graduating from college 11 years ago when she joined the company full-time doing payroll. She's now the vice president.

"It's been an opportunity for us to form a close, trusting relationship," says Donna. She adds that they work well together because they share a lot of the same personality traits, often knowing what the other's thinking, taking conversational shortcuts, even having secret codes. That said, the two don't always see eye to eye.

"Dad and I have a rule," she says. "We don't yell at each other in front of the employees."

For Donna, the most difficult thing for her and her dad is witnessing the other make a bad judgment call at work such as saying the wrong thing to an employee. When discussing such performance issues with each other, it's not fun, she says.

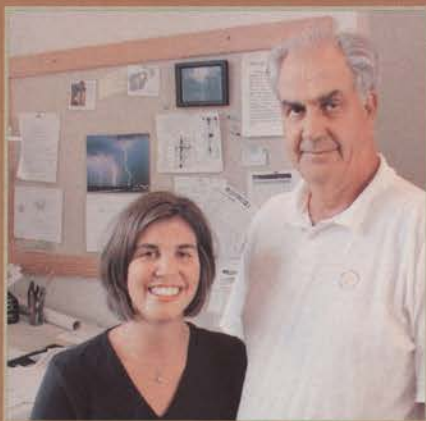
Donna adds that her father treats his employees equally, but when the criticism

starts, it begins with her because he wants her to be ready for her future position of ownership.

For Harry's part, he says it's been terrific getting to work with his daughter. "I had the pleasure of working with my father for some years before he retired. It was a tremendous experience for me then, and I'm reliving that experience now."

"Because of the disparity in age, it's a great learning situation for the younger person," adds Harry. "And there's an opportunity for the older member of the family to re-energize and get the energy from the younger person."

Donna admits that when she started full-time at ILT Vignocchi after graduation, she thought she knew more than her parents. She now says those "really immature" thoughts are long gone. "Now we have this fantastic relationship where we sit and we talk about where we want to take this beautiful creation into the next generation."





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The Kujawas (L to R): Joe, Ron, Sally and Chris. They run Kujawa Enterprises, Inc.

*continued from page 26*

Kevin says that his parents have managed to do a pretty good job with the family business but adds, "At times it can be stressful."

### Two brothers, two paths

"The only thing Chris ever wanted to do from the time he was young was be in the business," says Sally of her son, Chris, Executive VP of Business Development at KEI.

"And all I ever wanted to do since about third grade was be an architect," says Joe, who is Ron and Sally's youngest son and Executive VP of Operations and Administration at KEI.

Chris and Joe took two different paths into their family's business. Chris's path was direct, whereas Joe's was winding.

"(Chris) started working on the crews when he was 11 or 12 and was the only one that ever really said, "This is what I want to do,"" explains Sally.

Joe spent a few summers working at KEI before he was able to get work at an architectural firm. He went to Cornell and got his professional degree in architecture and then went to work in Washington, D.C. for five years where he ended up getting married.

*"You have to be totally honest with each other and keep your egos in check." — Sally Kujawa*

"My wife and I decided that we wanted to have a family, and we wanted one of us to stay home and raise our kids," recalls Joe. "She was a journalist and I was an architect and neither of us made enough money where that was going to be reality. She already had her graduate degree, so we said it was my turn, and I went to get my MBA."

After Joe got his MBA, he went into consulting primarily because it paid enough for his wife to stay at home and raise their kids. After about five years of consulting, though, he had had enough. "It started out a couple days a week every other week or so. Then it got to the point where I was gone four days a week. I was living in Chicago, and then I'd fly across the country to D.C. and stay there for

## Searching for QuickBooks-integrated scheduling software?

The logo for QXpress features a stylized 'Q' with a circular arrow around it, followed by 'Xpress' in a bold, sans-serif font. The entire logo is set against a dark blue background with a large, light blue arrow pointing upwards and to the right.

Circle 113





fast with my kids; I have lunch with my parents; and I have dinner with my wife." **LM**

—The author is a business writer who lives in Palatine, IL. Reach him at [gjmc90@yahoo.com](mailto:gjmc90@yahoo.com).

four days and then come home; and then with three kids it just stopped being a family life."

About that time, Joe and his wife went up to Milwaukee to visit family for a birthday party. While there, they saw the brand new facility that KEI was about to move into. On the way home, Joe and his wife began debating whether he should ask for a job in the family business.

In some ways, Joe thought it would be a good fit. "The problems that they were facing as a business were no different than the problems I was solving as the consultant for other companies."

But ultimately, Joe decided not to ask for a job. "If I went and said, 'Mom and Dad, can I get a job?' they would have been more than happy to give me one. And I made the decision not to because Chris had been in the company for 20 years and I would have felt like I was invading his turf."

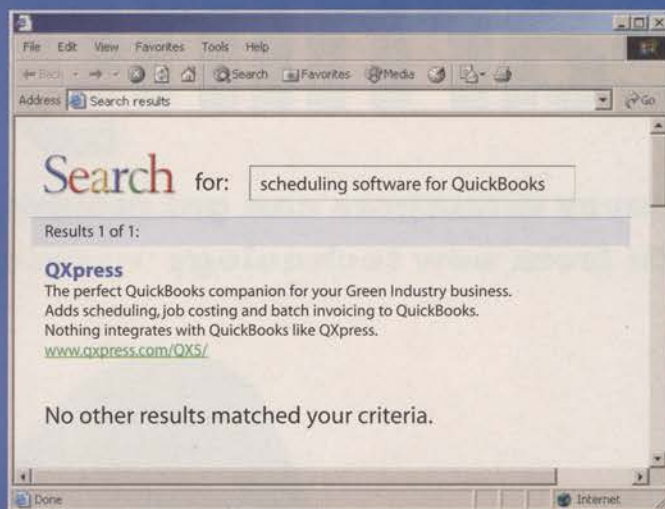
Then, out of the blue, he got a call from Chris, who wanted to know if he had ever thought about coming to work for KEI.

"And I was just like, 'Well, yeah, I have. What do Mom and Dad think?' And he said, 'I hadn't talked to them yet.'"

While Joe was happy to get the call from his brother, he didn't just blindly dive into the company. "We had some discussions about, 'Well, what would it be? What would the roles and responsibilities be? What do Mom and Dad think? Are they forcing you into this? Are you forcing them into it? Where's it going?'"

Joe finally joined the company last November and it has worked out really well—especially for his family life. "I have break-

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Circle 114



# Are you ready for **online learning?**

**How savvy managers can get maximum benefit from new technology** BY SUSAN L. PORTER

**W**hen you've spent a hard day supervising several ongoing projects or teams, the final thing you

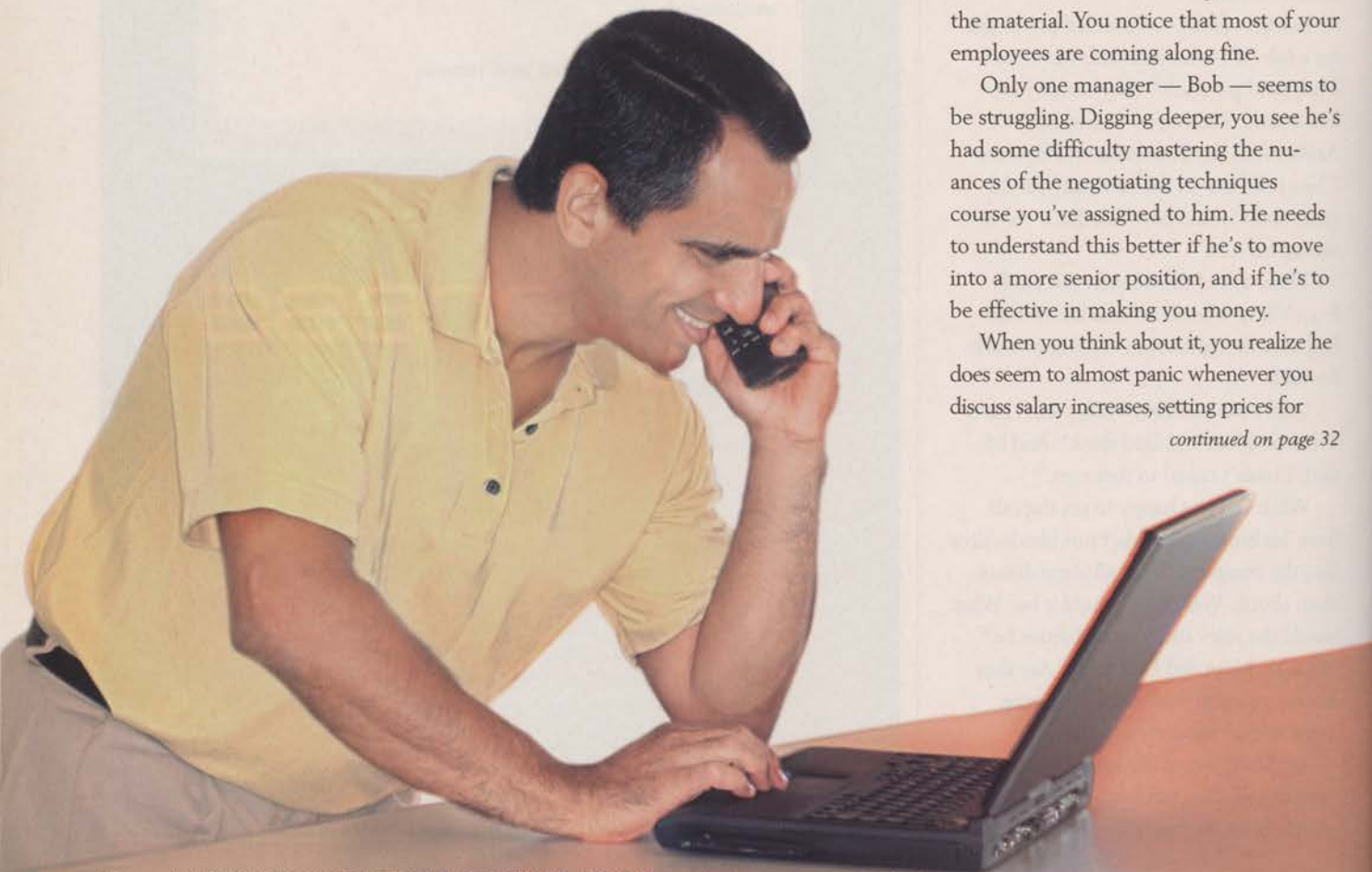
might do before going home is check e-mail or your financial books. Imagine then, instead of shutting off your computer, you take a few more minutes to review your key employees' progress in "school."

The "school" your employees attend is an online university of courses on business management and industry topics. Your key employees are all currently taking courses you've assigned to them, and the system lets you see how they're progressing. Each online course quizzes them and measures how well they understand the material. You notice that most of your employees are coming along fine.

Only one manager — Bob — seems to be struggling. Digging deeper, you see he's had some difficulty mastering the nuances of the negotiating techniques course you've assigned to him. He needs to understand this better if he's to move into a more senior position, and if he's to be effective in making you money.

When you think about it, you realize he does seem to almost panic whenever you discuss salary increases, setting prices for

*continued on page 32*







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DREAM  
OF BEING  
WHEN THEY  
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Online programs need to be understood so that owners and managers get maximum payback for their investment.

*continued from page 30*

subcontractor work or settling customer disputes. This unease, you realize, is probably due to the fact that Bob doesn't feel he can handle negotiating very well.

Armed with this insight, you decide that developing Bob's negotiating skills are vital to both your business and his future. You plan to set aside some time this week to coach Bob one-on-one in negotiating, and even plan a role-play scenario or two.

Is this scenario for real? It can be when you learn to combine the training programs you have now with the power and convenience of Internet-based learning. Online programs need to be understood so that owners and managers get maximum payback for their investment. They can be extremely effective; yet can be even more effective when you take those lessons into the field.

#### **Green Industry training**

The debut of the Green Industry Hub presents new opportunities to provide convenient and inexpensive training for yourself and your employees. The new technology of online distance learning is already well established for many colleges and universities.

While the concept may sound good, how can you be sure it's suited to your situation? What are the challenges this

type of learning offers, over other established methods? Finally, if training yourself and your employees is already a challenge and a financial investment, how will this type of program improve the situation?

Before you even get to a dollars and cents analysis of online learning's payback, decide what your main goals for training are, personally and as an owner or manager of other employees.

#### **Personal development**

Many Green Industry professionals feel their knowledge of horticulture, agronomy, arboriculture, irrigation and related technologies is strong. Others want to brush up on the basics or new management techniques. One thing many industry owners and managers agree upon is the need for more training and information on business management basics. In fact, the recent *Landscape Management Subscriber Insights 2004 Study* by Signet Research noted the following answers to the question: "What curriculum would you choose if you could go back to school for 90 days?"

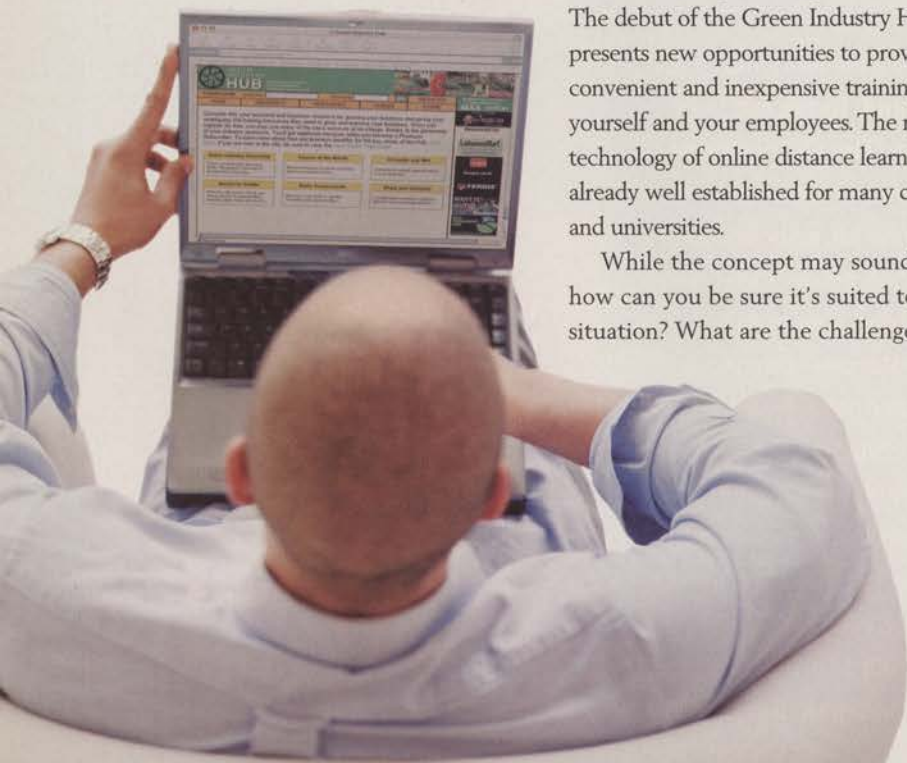
- ▶ 44% chose business management
- ▶ 29% chose landscape design/build
- ▶ 11% chose horticulture
- ▶ 9% chose agronomy

Next, we asked our subscriber sample specifically which types of business courses interested them and:

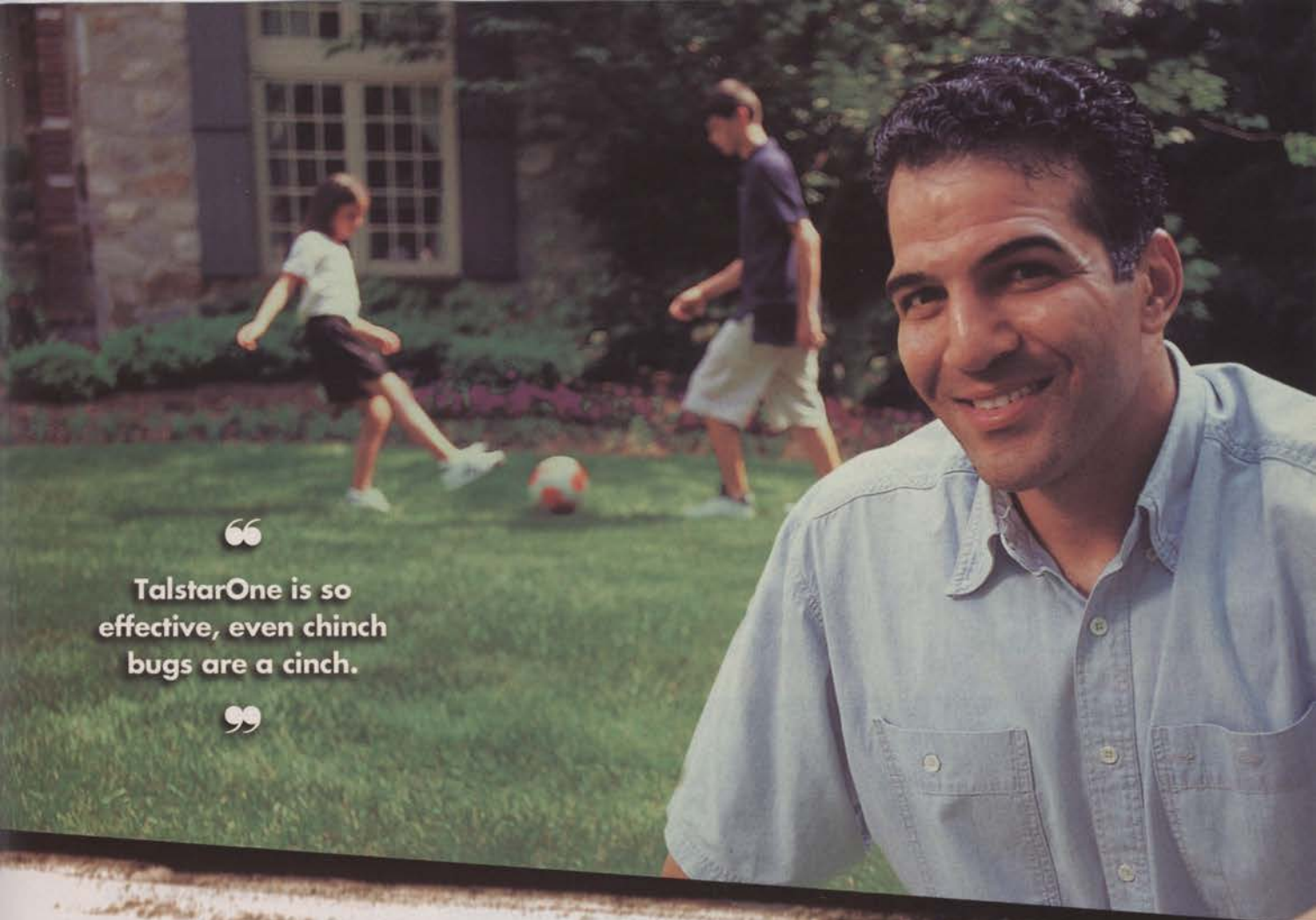
- ▶ 67% chose strategic planning
- ▶ 56% chose sales & marketing
- ▶ 52% chose accounting and finance
- ▶ 42% chose human relations management
- ▶ 40% chose operations
- ▶ 19% chose purchasing

If your effectiveness as an owner or manager can be enhanced by more knowledge in these areas, you have the challenge of finding the right program

*continued on page 34*







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*continued from page 34*  
 that's affordable to your budget and time. Most local community colleges and universities offer these types of courses and, of course, the prices vary wildly. One drawback for us in the Green Indus-



try is how to fit these courses in during the busy months.

This time crunch isn't limited to our industry, and, in response, many universities and colleges have designed online learning programs to reach out to students far away and offer convenience in learning. Plus, online technology can make learning very interactive and almost entertaining, a far cry from a dry, lengthy lecture. This innovation makes it much easier to study at your own personal pace and yet continue to learn.

The key is in finding the right courses to help in your day-to-day management.

**Employee education simplified**

Most Green Industry managers struggle with the ability to find, hire and keep promising employees. Many desperately look for people who show enough promise to develop into crew foremen, supervisors or middle managers. This is so critical to some landscape and lawn care organizations that their future growth depends on it.

Balance that with the reality that training in groups takes a consistent dedication of time, effort and money while those employees are being trained. Most owners or managers could easily figure out the exact cost of having 10 employees use one hour of training time vs. productive in-field work time. And that wouldn't include the cost of time to develop training materials and present them. Yet most of these same owners and managers value good training as a way to make their operations more effective, safe and profitable.

The challenge comes in finding time and appropriate training materials, and in motivating employees to participate. One reason online learning courses appeal to many employees is that they're designed to be interactive and interesting. When managers can challenge employees to

study certain courses, and when they can monitor employees' progress, the process becomes a partnership. Employees recognize that the owner or manager has invested in them and is interested in their progress. This, in turn, can play a large role in employee retention and development.

Online learning has the added benefit of using a technology with which many entry-level employees are familiar. Most young employees have access to the Internet and therefore can easily understand and use the programs on their own time. Many online learning systems are built to adapt to various methods of online connection—whether it's a fast T-1 or wireless connection or a slow dial-up. The information is available in the user's format.

**Online courses & real life training**

One key to maximizing any online investment is to understand that everyone has different learning styles. Some people like to read and analyze a new idea; others learn best with active projects or working within a group.

Online learning programs can be an excellent way to provide a variety of material, and they're enhanced with active practice or in-field training to reinforce them.

How can you reinforce lessons learned online? There are a number of ways, and none of them has to be complicated:

- ▶ Coordinate your regular training with the topics you've selected for employees online so that the group approach reviews key points presented online.
- ▶ Select employees to lead a group discussion of a topic he or she is studying online.
- ▶ Set aside a few moments in the field to discuss a plant, a technique or a piece of equipment and encourage questions.

Role-playing can be a 5-minute discussion one-on-one, or it can be an example played out before a group. Any manager or owner should be able to play the customer, vendor or co-worker easily enough! **LM**



# I DESIGNED THE BODY, BUT MY ISUZU CREW CAB MAKES IT WORK.



Jay Boyce, owner of Boyce Landscape Inc., knew just what he wanted to make the perfect landscape truck, but he needed a very special truck chassis to complete the picture.

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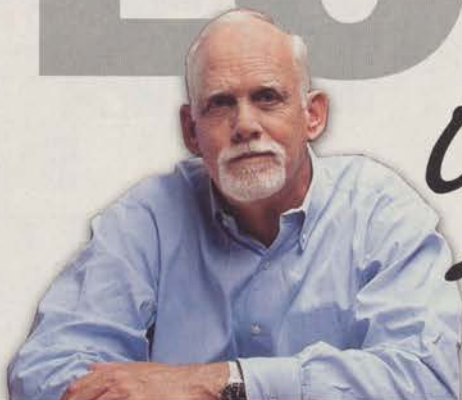


'04

# PEOPLE

## of the Year

Sam  
Lang



### LAWN CARE

BY RON HALL / Editor-in-Chief

Sandersville is a nice enough place but little more than a wide spot in the road between Macon and Augusta in central Georgia. A young Sam Lang knew he wasn't going to stick around.

"We had to drive 45 miles just to go to a picture show," he recalls.

So, he left. He attended the University of Georgia and studied agronomy and economics. He continued his studies at Georgia College, and eventually earned an MBA. While in graduate school, he was recruited and hired by Orkin Lawn Care. Finally, in 1989 he moved to Raleigh, NC (to hear him say it, as far north as he ever wants to live) and started his own lawn care company, Fairway Green.

Fence-post thin, his hair the color of snow and a great storyteller in his distinctive southern

baritone, Lang rarely blends into the background.

And he's come a long way (not counting the two occasions he sailed the Atlantic in a small boat) and done much for his chosen industry, probably more than he could have imagined as a youngster in central Georgia. His efforts, apart from the success of his small lawn care operation, will be a long-term boost to the health and growth of the turfgrass industry, especially in the Southeast.

#### Hard work pays off

His most visible contribution is the work he's done to secure funding for the Center for Turf Grass Research and Education at North Carolina State University. The Center's mission is to find more environmentally friendly ways to manage the state's 22 million acres of turfgrass.

The Center was made possible, in a very large part, by

Lang's efforts at the NC State Capitol, just blocks from his Fairway Green offices. It's a place he's gotten to know well. He's there about once a week when the state assembly is in session. "Politics is a good-ol'-boy network. I can function in a good-ol'-boy network," says Lang in an understatement.

But he admits he's gotten his ears pinned back a few times in the process.

"I went down there 13 years ago because we couldn't spray for fleas and ticks for structural pest control companies," he recalls. "I wanted to change the law, but I was clueless about what I was doing."

He's learned that approaching lawmakers in a spirit of compromise rather than confrontation works a lot better, and, after a lot of wrangling with lawmakers, helped strike a deal that provides \$700,000 annually to establish and fund the turfgrass center. The money comes from taxes on the sale of fertilizer and seed to people who aren't farmers. While such sales had previously been exempt from the sales tax, Lang and others within

the Green Industry feared legislators, looking desperately for additional revenue, were going to impose the tax with or without the turfgrass industry's blessing.

"It was a runaway train that we couldn't stop," says Lang. "We cut a deal and said we

### Career Timeline

1977 — Graduates from the University of Georgia, BSA

1984 — Recruited by Orkin Lawn Care

1989 — Starts Fairway Green, Raleigh, NC

1992-2002 — Board member of the Turfgrass Council of North Carolina

1996-98 — Serves on the PLCAA Board of Directors

1998 — Serves as president of the NC Turfgrass Council

2001 — Helps secure funding for NCSU Turf Grass Research and Education Center

Present — Continues efforts to secure funding for turfgrass research



would sponsor the legislation. We said we would take the heat for it as long as you let us have \$700,000 of the money."

But he's not totally pleased with the results. "I screwed up," he says. "I should have asked for a percentage. I'm going back and trying to change that." He says that the tax took in about \$5.8 million. He expects the amount to keep growing as the turf industry grows. Even so, his efforts haven't gone unrecognized or unappreciated.

"Sam has been able to see the bigger picture," says Dr. Fred Yelverton, professor and extension specialist at NCSU. "Even though his business is lawn care, he realizes he is part of the bigger turfgrass industry. His effect upon turfgrass in our state has been tremendous and, as time goes by, I think it's going to be even bigger."

Acting NCSU Chancellor James Oblinger echoes those thoughts. "Sam's participation in the legislative arena has assisted North Carolina State University with its land-grant mission by helping us cater to the research and outreach needs of the turfgrass industry and finding the resources to address those needs," he says. "We feel fortunate at North Carolina State University to have such a valuable partnership with this industry leader."

### Taking care of home

Nor has Lang forgotten his native Georgia. "I've been able to grab a few dollars out of Washington D.C. for the University of Georgia in conjunction with NC State, too," he says.

Turfgrass expert Dr. Gil Landry, who is establishing a Center for Urban Agriculture in Georgia, says he's working to secure the funding that Lang discovered through the U.S. EPA and will be shared with NCSU. Landry anticipates it will amount to about \$100,000 annually, at least initially.

"While Sam was working in our Georgia industry with Rollins (Orkin Lawn Care), he very willingly gave his time to speak to

our turf management students at the university," says Landry.

At 51, Lang insists he's far from retiring. "Retirement for me would be the end of me. I love the industry and the business," he

says. Even so, he's got some land near the Virginia border that has some fine bird hunting on it, and he says he wouldn't mind spending more time there. **LM**

For another profile, turn to page 38 ▶

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# '04 PEOPLE of the Year

## Milton "Dusty" Hallman



### GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

BY JASON STAHL /  
Managing Editor

Milton "Dusty" Hallman looks like the kind of guy you wouldn't want to make angry. He's built like a bull, and he's as strong as one too as the opposition found out during his high school playing days as an offensive and defensive tackle at Sea Breeze High School in Daytona Beach.

But would you believe he's more of a gentle giant, immersing himself in creative writing at night and taking on what he calls a "servant manager" role with his grounds staff?

"I like the biblical approach to management, kind of like the way Jesus washed the feet of his disciples," Hallman says. "We as managers need to take care of the needs of our employees with that same kind of love and devotion."

"You can't motivate people unless you know their passions and can relate to them," he continues. "You have to let them see that you're a person and not an authority figure they can't relate to."

#### Hard to relate

Relating to those on his grounds staff was particularly difficult when he was the Landscape Manager for the Marriott Frenchman's Reef Resort in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. The staff was composed of mostly West Indians with whom he had trouble forming a bond with. In Hallman's way of thinking, this was a significant roadblock to successfully performing his job.

"I liked reggae music, and they loved it, too, so I had that in common with them and we formed a bond," Hallman says. "But when I had a problem with an individual's work ethic, I didn't know how to handle it. So I asked an island friend of mine how I should handle it as a boss and how the staffers would handle it as West Indians."

It was Hallman's experience forming a brotherhood with another race that planted the seeds for a novel he's currently working on.

"That's what it's about — race relations on an island,"

Hallman says. "My friend, Levi, is a best buddy of mine now. We overcame the black/white thing immediately and became like family."

#### A passion for plants

Hallman's passion for plants began at a very early age when his grandmother took him out to her garden to draw pictures of the plants he saw. But he never imagined he would make a career out of that passion.

In high school, he wanted to be either a doctor or football player. The University of Florida took a hard look at him as a recruit, but five concussions, one of which made him blind for six hours, made him give up his dreams of gridiron glory. Still, he gave nary a thought to a career in the Green Industry, electing to major in English in college.

But he knew where his heart was when, upon graduation, he accepted a job as the Head Groundskeeper at Ocean Villas Condominiums in St. Augustine, FL. And people could see groundskeeping was more than a job to him when he later earned certification as a Master Gardener and Certified Pesticide Applicator.

Since that first job, Hallman has held four other positions in grounds management as well as owned his own landscaping company and served as a design and sales consultant for another one. The reason for not staying in one place for too long is his

#### Career timeline

1982-1984 — Head Groundskeeper, Ocean Villas Condominiums, St. Augustine, FL

1984-1985 — Landscape Crew Chief, Anastasia Nursery & Landscape Co., St. Augustine, FL

1985-1986 — Owner/Manager/Landscape Designer, Green Thumb Landscaping, St. Augustine, FL

1986-1988 — Groundskeeping Supervisor, Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, St. Augustine, FL

1988-1993 — Landscape Manager, Marriott Frenchman's Reef & Morning Resorts, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

1993-1994 — Operations Manager, ISS Landscape Management Services, Tampa, FL

1994-1995 — Design and Sales Consultant, Greenkeepers, Largo, FL

1995-1998 — Operations Manager, Ground Control Landscaping, Tampa, FL

1998-present — Operations Manager, Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park, Clearwater, FL

1999 — Southeast Regional Director, Board of Directors, PGMS

2002 — National President-Elect, Executive Board, PGMS

2003 — National President, Executive Board, PGMS

2004 — National Past-President, Executive Board, PGMS



desire for new challenges.

"I'm constantly looking for a fresh challenge," Hallman says. "If I'm at the same place for four years, I have my systems dialed in and I go on cruise control and I get bored."

It makes sense then that after the last six years as the Operations Manager for Sylvan Abbey Memorial Park in Clearwater, he has accepted a new position with the same company, Stewart Enterprises, Inc. (the third largest provider in the death care industry). The new job will put him in central North Carolina, near where he

owns 21 acres of land he uses for vacations.

#### Dedication to industry

One thing that has remained constant in Hallman's career is his dedication to improving the grounds industry through his involvement in the Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS). It started in 1992 when he became a Certified Grounds Manager. Since then, he's held positions as southeast regional director, president-elect and president.

"One of the things we need to do at PGMS is continue to

keep past presidents involved," Hallman says. "Over the last 10 years, we've seen past presidents stay involved, and now we're able to retain our past leaders and bring their knowledge to the forefront."

"I want to continue to grow branches," he continues. "Of the big landscape associations, we're the only one with local branches with national memberships. I was just starting to establish a branch in St. Thomas when Hurricane Hugo hit. But we did get to start a branch in North Carolina, and I'm excited about that."

Over 25 years into his grounds career, Hallman has noted one difference from when he first started out to now.

"Early in my career, the pleasure I got from the job was being able to stand back and see what you did and watch plants grow," he says. "Now, it's watching people grow." **LM**

— Editor's note: Look for the announcement of our Person of the Year in the Landscape Contracting category in our February '05 issue. The award will be presented at the first-ever combined ALCA/PLCAA Executive Forum later that month.



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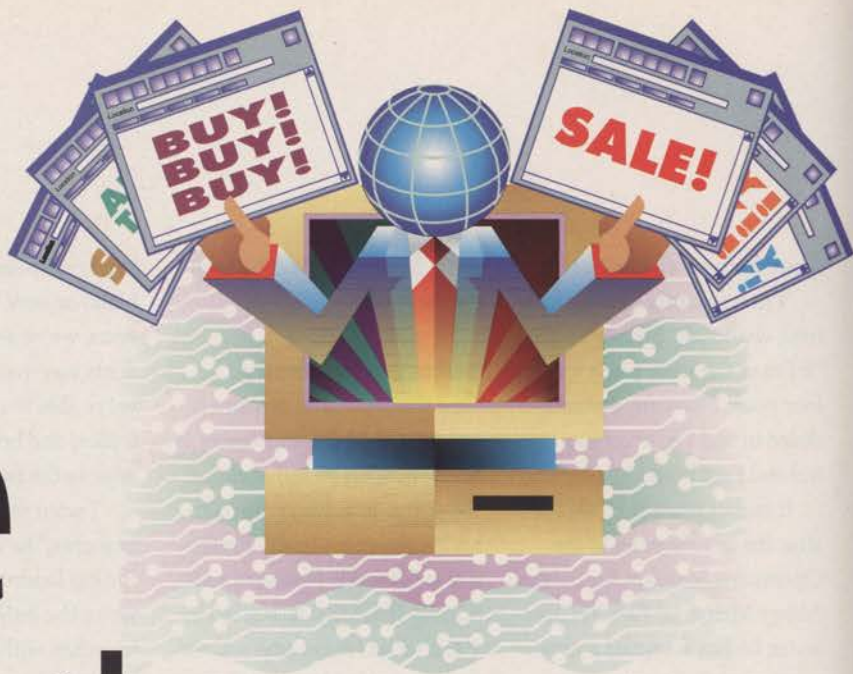
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# THE CASE FOR online marketing

**Why not offer potential customers a chance to find you and learn of your services at the touch of a few key strokes?**

BY TOBIAS DENGEL AND TODD WALRATH

**A**cross the country, people are discovering the unbeatable advantages of turning to their computers at home or at work and using online Yellow Pages to search for local business services of all types, including landscape contractors. If consumers cannot access your business on the Web, you're missing out on developing new customer relationships.

## Quite a concept

Online Yellow Pages, also

referred to as Internet Yellow Pages or online directories, are recent consumer-friendly innovations that provide excellent local search results after just a few keystrokes. For example, a homeowner looking for a residential landscape contractor to install fieldstone walls or an in-ground sprinkler system can type in a couple of key words plus his or her home zip code at Yahoo Yellow Pages, [Yellow-pages.com](http://Yellow-pages.com) or [Switchboard.com](http://Switchboard.com). Within seconds, they find contractors who had the marketing savvy to advertise any of those services in that directory.

Online marketing can be a cost effective way to build busi-

ness because it allows easy targeting of potential customers already looking for specific services in selected geographic areas.

The most popular online directory is Yahoo Yellow Pages. But, while a business would do well to list in Yahoo Yellow Pages, it has to be able to be found in other Internet Yellow Pages as well in order to reach other online searchers.

A survey of 5,582 online shoppers released earlier this year and conducted by the Kelsey Group, a Princeton, NJ research and advisory firm, and [BizRate.com](http://BizRate.com), a shopping search engine, noted that 44% of respondents performed more

local commercial searches on the Internet than the year before. (With so many people switching from slow modem connections to broadband connections, online searching is bound to continue its phenomenal growth.)

The study also noted that about one-fourth of the searches were for merchants near shoppers' homes or workplaces, which was more than double the percentage estimated the previous year. And research showed 84% of online users in one survey called a business after finding it online.

## How to get aboard

While the various online services offer easy navigation for consumers looking for products and services, it's another story for local businesses looking to list. With up to 50 fields to fill out, the listing process at each directory can be complex, time-consuming and confusing. And no "live" help is offered to guide the businesses.

Fortunately, there are companies that specialize in facilitat-

*continued on page 42*





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continued from page 40  
ing electronic marketing. They are excellent resources for small-business owners who don't have the time to work through the do-it-yourself screens at multiple directories.

These outside services help small firms create and manage a successful online business presence in those directories.

Monthly fees for listing services are based upon the number of categories in which the business will be listed, the geographies in which it wants to advertise, and the number of key words or phrases the business wants to use.

Online advertising allows businesses to use key words that narrow down the pool of potential customers the business pays to reach to those it wants to target.

The facilitator will help you pick the same words that searchers who you want to target are likely to use — horticulture, hedge trimming or flagstone walkways, for example — as well as the zip codes or town names.

Typically, the online Yellow Page facilitators have several ways to track how many peo-

ple saw your ad and how many clicked onto your Web site, enabling you to easily assess the effectiveness of the listings and your return on investment. The online medium is much more amenable than the print medium to the learning process — changing categories or key phrases can boost numbers and changing ad copy can help the click-thru rate rise.

The whole concept of buying an ad on the Internet is so new (just a few years old) that, in many zip codes, there may not yet be even one local land-

scape contractor who pops up in response to a search for lawn sprinklers, turf fertilizing, artificial turf, or even more surprisingly, landscaping or gardening services.

Try your own zip code and a few of the key words that you use to describe your business in print phone book ads at a couple of online Yellow Pages and see what you get. **LM**

— The authors are co-founders of Lead Logic, Inc. and offer assistance in setting up and optimizing online advertising. Contact them at 877/532-5644 or visit [www.leadlogic.com](http://www.leadlogic.com).

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# Blades of Steel

## *F.O.E. Unveils Green Guardians*

BY DANTE GREENFIELD  
*Daily Fescue Great Plains*  
 Correspondent

In an unprecedented move yesterday, the Federation for Overthrowing EverRide (F.O.E.) introduced its latest plan to lead the "turf management" company to its demise: the Green Guardians.

Plucked from the earth at an

early age, the Green Guardians attended F.O.E.'s top anti-terror schools to train in the arts of mower interrogation and hand-to-Z combat.

Now they've been briefed on the most classified mission of their short, grassy lives: Destroy the machines sent to annihilate their brother and sister blades.

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# Making managers

**Are you “grooming” your Hispanic/Latino employees to be your top managers of the future?** BY BARBARA MULHERN

Managers (L to R) Javier Murillo, Oliver Diaz and Hector Lopez have grown at Cagwin & Dorward.

**P**icture yourself in this position: It's 20 years down the road, and you're ready to retire. Your children — now all adults — are settled in non-Green Industry careers. Who will take over your landscape or commercial lawn

care business? Who are your top managers of the future? Are you “grooming” them from within, and how well will they relate to your increasingly diverse customer base?

Your company leaders of the future are likely your Hispanic/Latino employees, members of the ethnic group whose population in the United States already stands at 39 million and is predicted to increase to 103 million by the year 2050, says attorney Nicole Gonzalez DeVoss of Fisher & Phillips LLP in New Orleans. If you aren't already taking steps to retain and promote your best Hispanic workers, you're missing out, adds Gonzalez DeVoss, a member of her law firm's Hispanic Business Practice Group.

“One of the great benefits of promoting these employees is that you can instantaneously increase your marketability as a business,” she says. “Employing a diverse workforce and placing minorities into higher positions where they may have direct interaction with customers is a great way to boost goodwill with a clientele that is also racially and ethnically diverse.

“Another benefit is that Hispanic employees in managerial positions can serve as a liaison between you, the company

*continued on page 46*





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*continued from page 44*

and the rest of your employees. Many times, there may be a great divide between a predominantly Hispanic work force and the management of a company. By integrating the two, you're likely to see increased communication between employees and management."

**Success stories**

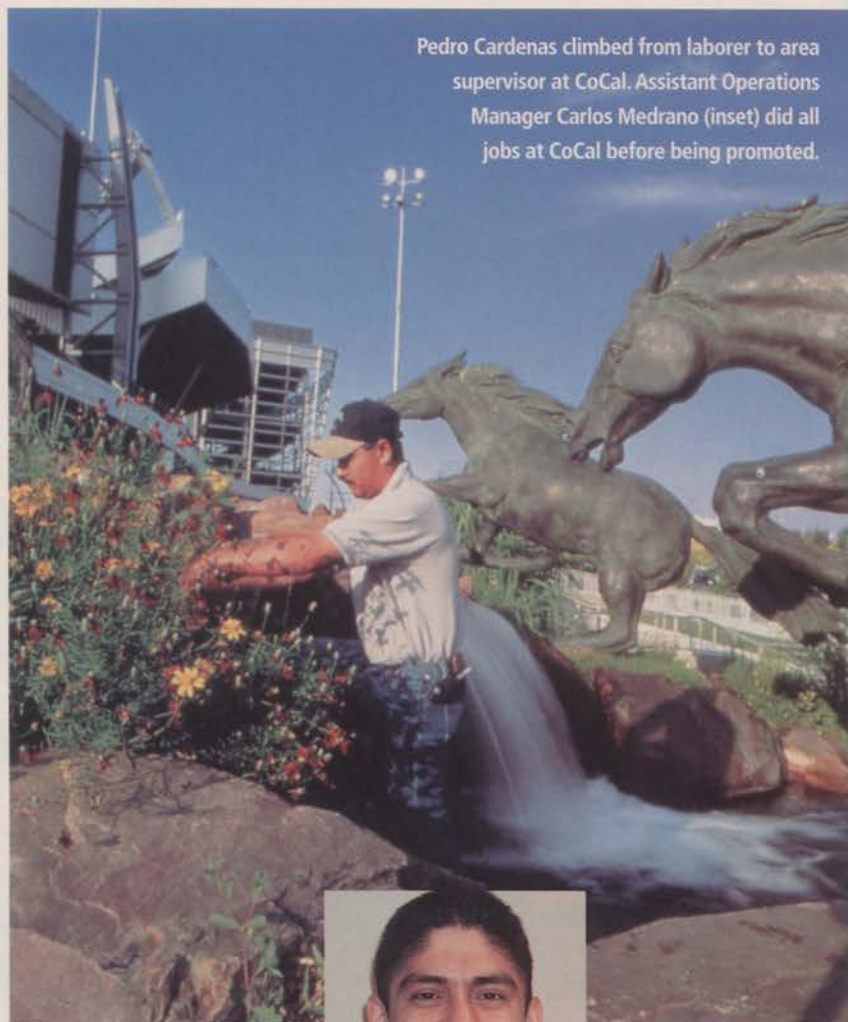
Cagwin & Dorward in Novato, CA, doesn't have a corporate program that singles out Hispanics to accelerate their careers. "We do have programs that are aimed at accelerating all of our employees' personal skills and careers," President/CEO Dennis Dougherty says. Seven out of 17 of the company's Landscape Maintenance Department's account managers and extra work managers are Hispanic. All four field supervisors are Hispanic. Overall, 171 of the 221 Landscape Maintenance Department's employees are Hispanic.

Account Managers Javier Murillo, Oliver Diaz and Hector Lopez offered these insights on simple ways top management has made them feel comfortable and encouraged them to succeed:

"One of the owners came up to me when I just started with the company. He was dressed in business clothes and shiny shoes. He reached out and shook my hand and welcomed me into the company."

"I had lunch with two of the owners one day. They talked about what I wanted to accomplish. We went to a bookstore and bought a cassette player and English language tapes. I will always remember this. One of the owners started out as a gardener (landscape maintenance worker) and is now the president. This gives me confidence that I may succeed, too."

All three men said that certain people within the company acted as their mentors — showing a "special interest" in their careers. These people spent time training them in their "hard skills" (irrigation, plant



Pedro Cardenas climbed from laborer to area supervisor at CoCal. Assistant Operations Manager Carlos Medrano (inset) did all jobs at CoCal before being promoted.



health care, etc.). Help, they said, was never refused. They were allowed to make mistakes, and were given the help needed to "fix" them.

Among the training programs Cagwin & Dorward offers to its employees are Blue Sky, a 20-session, 4-hour course on organizational learning, personal effectiveness and development; and Collaborative Based Sales, a course on customer relationship building. Murillo, Diaz and Lopez said that this training tells them that "the company really cares" about them and is trying to help them advance.

CoCal Landscape in Denver, CO, owned by Tom Fochtman and Jesus "Chuy" Medrano, is a "true minority/Hispanic company," Fochtman says. About 88% of the 460 employees at CoCal's four

Colorado locations are Hispanic. Nearly 100% of its foremen are Hispanic, and all area supervisors in the landscape and renovations area are Hispanic.

"A very effective program that we started several years ago is our Rising Stars program," Fochtman says. "Each area supervisor is asked to identify the one or two individuals from their team who will become a foreman, but more importantly, the ones who appear to have the potential to move beyond the foreman level position. Once identified, they receive a higher level of mentoring from their area supervisor and participate in regularly scheduled meetings. They receive accelerated training in paperwork, understanding labor reports, employee manage-

*continued on page 48*





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*continued from page 46*

ment and other career-building skills, and are generally paid more attention to."

Those employees who have been promoted at CoCal take "tremendous pride" in being recognized as company leaders, Fochtman says, plus receive higher compensation that has enabled many of them to purchase homes; a guarantee (for most of them) of year-round employment in a seasonal market; and an opportunity, for many, to represent the company at the annual GIE trade show in November.

**Potential barriers**

Language is clearly a potential barrier to advancement for many Hispanic workers in landscape and commercial lawn care firms. "Not speaking English has held some of our people back," Fochtman says. "They can get by for a period of time as a foreman without speaking some English, but at some point they must become fluent in the English language. Conversely, our senior managers must have a grasp of Spanish to communicate with our predominantly Hispanic workforce."

CoCal's Human Resources Department offers English and Spanish classes during the winter months. "One of the things we feel strongly about and talk to our Hispanic employees about is the fact that knowing English will help them immensely in their everyday lives. I think our employees are met with discrimination every day of their lives, when they need help in the department store, when pursuing medical help, etc. The way to combat that is to speak English," Fochtman says.

It's also critical that non-Hispanic managers gain a good understanding of their workers' cultures. For example, many Hispanic workers may not feel comfortable being put into "leadership" positions. This has been the case at CoCal, and the company has used outside consultants to present leadership seminars, plus has done its own leadership training internally.

In some cases, you may have to think creatively to find a way around a barrier to advancement that you didn't expect. Example: J. Frank Schmidt & Son in Boring, CO, has successfully promoted Hispanic supervisors to foreperson positions. Approximately 90% of the nursery's employees are Hispanic.

The nursery discovered, though, that its Hispanic forepersons weren't at all happy about being paid monthly, as all salaried staff is paid. "We pay hourly employees weekly, and having a weekly paycheck is important for them. As a consequence, we have a special Hourly Foreperson category specifically for Hispanics," Human Resource Director Jack Davis says. "That causes some discontent with the salaried folks. Some don't understand why the Hourly forepersons get overtime while the salaried foreperson doesn't. Others feel we are discriminating against Hispanics or that we don't trust them to be salaried. In fact, it is the Hispanics' choice." The nursery is continuing to explore other options.

**Management skills**

Whether it's in the promotion of your Hispanic employees or any other employees, the skills you have as an owner or top manager will be critical to your success, says Matthew Hayden, president of Hayden-Graham LLC in Madison, WI, a national consulting firm on leadership and management. Among his suggestions:

- ▶ **Use a Hispanic/Latino "mentor" yourself** — an outside advisor, either paid or unpaid, who can help as a "sounding board."
- ▶ **Have an attitude that your workers really are individuals** — not that you "can't tell one from the other."
- ▶ **Take risks by identifying highly promotable Hispanic employees.** "Most managers don't like to take those risks and get frank and honest about who's highly promotable and who's not," Hayden says.



**Raymundo Cervantes worked hard for CoCal and is now a Renovations Supervisor.**

▶ **Don't have a "sink or swim" mentality** — don't promote someone, then walk away, saying, "You'd better get it all right."

▶ **Have clear expectations about the position,** and clearly communicate them.

▶ **Provide support and encouragement.** Grow the person's assets and strengths.

▶ **Have clear metrics for success** — and make sure they're the same for everyone.

It's also important, Murillo, Diaz and Lopez say, that company owners "give employees examples of role models and how they succeeded," and that they spend some time talking individually with the employees they're hoping to promote.

"My advice would be to work hard to develop a friendly, respectful and non-threatening environment for your Hispanic employees," Fochtman says. "Talk to them and get to understand their culture. They are different, but not that much. Learn Spanish so you can converse with them. Have the once a month barbecue in the yard or whatever venue works for you to get to know your people and show them you're accessible. Listen to what they have to say, act on the good ideas they bring, and give the recognition where due. Pretty simple stuff, really." **LJM**

— *The author is an agricultural/horticultural project consultant and freelance writer who lives in rural Belleville, WI. Contact her at [bamu100@aol.com](mailto:bamu100@aol.com).*





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# Inside the Owner's Head

**BUSINESS** HE'S NOT HEAVY, HE'S . . .

## Mark & Cory Lay

► AA Tex Lawn Co., Inc.

BY JASON STAHL / Managing Editor

Mark and Cory Lay own AA Tex Lawn Co., Inc., a \$900,000 full-service landscape company located in Indian Trail, NC, that has been in business for 25 years. The company focuses on commercial maintenance (100%), with 60% being contracted work and 40% upsells. The company, which has 16 employees, has also performed landscape renovation, irrigation system repair and drainage work. Sales are projected to be \$1.25 million in 2005. Mark, 44, handles the business end of the company, while Cory, 34, handles the operations.

### What's it like having a brother as a partner in your business?

**Cory:** Mark's more of a driver than I am. We're both hard-headed go-getters who don't let up. We do whatever it takes to get it done. We push each other hard because no one else can do it. And we're straightforward with each other.

**Mark:** We don't beat around the bush. Everything's on the table. If one of us is messing up, the other one says something. But we've got our eye on the big picture. We know the rules and what we're supposed to be doing.

### How did you guys get into the business?

**Mark:** I did a bunch of different things before I got into landscaping — carpentry, working on cars. I didn't feel like I was getting paid enough for the work I was doing. But I've basically been cutting grass

since I was 11 or 12. I always had that in my mind as something that I knew that I could do well.

**Cory:** I went in the Navy and worked on F-14s, and when I got out I was going to work for one of the airlines but I realized it wasn't a stable market. So I decided to work with Mark and liked it enough to want to continue and grow the business.

### How do you keep your employees from fleeing the coop?

**Mark:** We treat them with the respect that any person deserves and wants. They go above and beyond the call of duty because they know we expect them to be the best and do the best and all that that entails. With that philosophy, everybody feels good and everybody is assimilated.

**Cory:** We empower our guys. We tell them to do the extra task if it doesn't take more than 15 minutes. For instance, if there's tall grass still standing next to a natural area, we tell them to go ahead and knock it down. Those little things mean a lot to customers.

### How about hiring people? What's been your experience this year?

**Mark:** We've been trying to bring in key people this year but it hasn't worked well. We're looking for the right people, and the right people are out there but they just need the right environment. We want to hire talent. We can coach them, but if they have a background in this industry, it would sure help. We tell them what we want to get done and how to act, and then we nur-



ture them along to see if they'll make it. We get rid of them quickly if we see that they're not going to make it. It's a constant hiring process. They've got to do things the AA Tex-Lawn way.

### You guys are going through an exciting growth period, aren't you?

**Mark:** Our maintenance has basically doubled and we've achieved more than 30% growth. This year, we're finally doing a real budget with reachable goals and also goals that will be tough to hit. For the first 18 to 20 years, I was basically a technician out cutting grass. Then, when I closed in on 40, I decided I needed more of a challenge and started going to ALCA events. We just weren't making it happen like we thought.

**Cory:** We realized that this is a real business, and there's more to it than just mowing grass and collecting money. We needed to structure it like a real business with sales goals, production goals, expenditure budgets, etc.

— AA Tex Lawn Co., Inc., participates in JP Horizons' People Solutions programs. To learn more visit [www.jp horizons.com](http://www.jp horizons.com) or call 877/574-5267.



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# Innovations

TECHNOLOGY HOT NEW PRODUCTS

3



4



1



2



## 1 Grass-eatin' spider

The Jacobsen Spider ILD-1 Radio-Controlled Cutter attracted crowds at this year's Outdoor Power Equipment Expo in Louisville. The Spider mows slopes up to 40°, depending upon conditions. An operator uses radio control, can start and stop the mower's Kawasaki 4-cycle V-twin engine, as well as manage its forward and reverse direction, height of cut and hydrostatic transmission. The unit features continuous 360° steering. With a 31.5-in.-wide cut, it can offer up to six times greater productivity than a single gas-driven string trimmer, says Jacobsen. Operator exposure to vibration is eliminated and noise exposure reduced.

For more information contact Jacobsen at 888/922-8873 or [www.jacobsen.com](http://www.jacobsen.com) / circle no. 279

## 2 Load and lock

Worried about your commercial mowers bouncing around on the back of your trailers? This device, the Prolocker wheel lock, that we saw demonstrated at the Expo in Louisville can solve that problem. You won't need chains, straps or tie-downs anymore. You'll only need one Prolocker per mower, and it mounts to either the left or right side. With no unattached parts to lose, it's a snap to operate. Just drive the mower into the wheel lock and it auto locks. Install it to any deck in minutes. It attaches and releases to the deck with the pull of one pin.

For more information contact ProLawn Equipment, LLC at 772/229-1690 or [www.prolockers.com](http://www.prolockers.com) / circle no. 280

## 3 Flail like a fanatic

US Mower's 40-in. Samauri excavator mower is a new direct-drive flail mower attachment designed and built specifically for compact excavators with as little as 13 gpm auxiliary flow. It features T-1 high strength steel with polyester powder coat finish and 2-lb. offset flail mulching blades. This unit can cut up to 4-in. material and also features reversible blade rotation and a 13 to 30 gpm gear type hydraulic motor.

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## 4 Spread the love

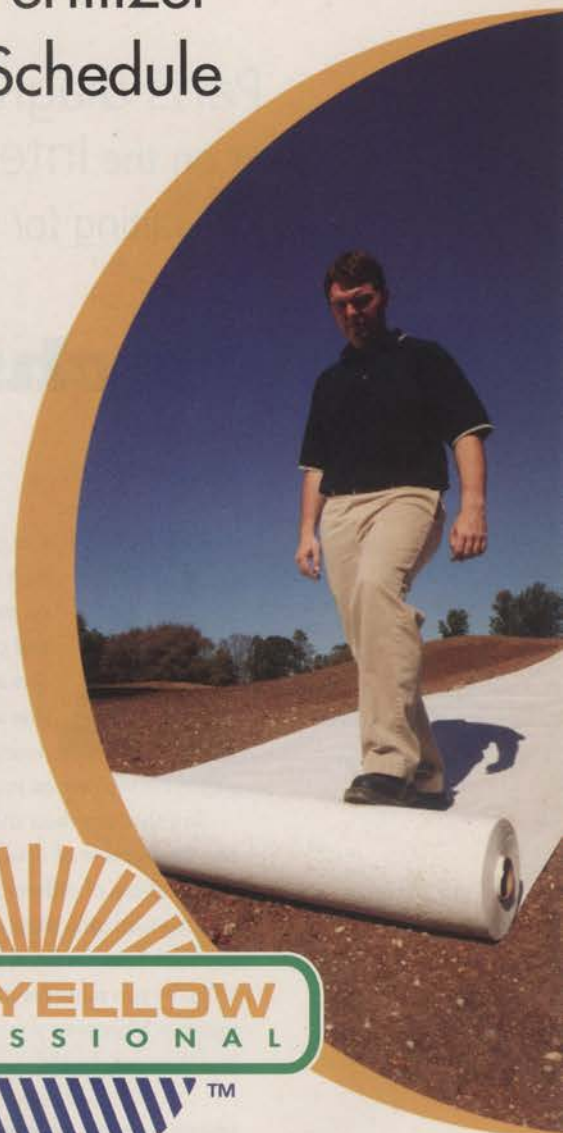
Perma Green Supreme's Ride-On Magnum spreader features a Honda engine with built-in wet clutch, heavy-duty transmission, 150-lb. capacity hopper and 12-gal. spray tank. It also sports a larger 2-GPM pump and an improved spreader mechanism. The laser-cut stainless steel frame is precision stamped. The Magnum can apply granular fertilizer and liquid herbicide simultaneously. Front-mounted broadcast nozzles provide two regulated spray widths, 11 ft. for broadcast application and 3 ft. for trimming. At 5 mph in high gear, the Magnum can cover 3,000 sq. ft. per minute, where a typical acre can be treated in fewer than 20 minutes.

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Parts diagrams and service manuals are out on the Internet and even burned on CDs just waiting for you. Knowledge is truly power.



## Shop techs going cyber

BY HARRY SMITH

**A**s an old-time parts guy from the dark ages (the mid 70s), I grew up on paper and microfiche manuals and parts lists. There's something about the feel of a paper manual that's reassuring. You can make notes, comments and reminders on paper. It's tougher on microfiche but not impossible.

But that was then and this is now. Things change, like the number of new manufacturers out there. There are hundreds of different equipment models and options. Ordering parts or just identifying the parts you need has become a real challenge. In some instances, it will cost you more for a part if you don't have the part number. Moreover, you're wasting your valuable time and your employees'.

### Internet to the rescue

Thankfully, there's help for these costly emerging headaches — your computer and the Internet. For example, you can now visit [www.briggsandstratton.com](http://www.briggsandstratton.com), select your region and language, pick your engine and then choose an owner's manual or a parts list and print it out as an Adobe .pdf file. You can even order a service manual or a CD-ROM set of repair manuals.

Another player in this information explosion is PartSmart from [www.arinet.com](http://www.arinet.com). PartSmart offers parts information from over 50 manufacturers. Buy the appropriate subscriptions and you'll have instant access to parts diagrams and parts lists for your equipment. You can print out the exploded views, make lists of the

parts you need including pick lists, and, in some instances, order these parts directly from your computer. You can renew your subscription, and all the new models are included with the refill.

### New players

Briggs and Stratton isn't the only one with online access to parts and owner's manuals. Visit [www.toro.com](http://www.toro.com). Take along your model and serial number. You can access the parts and owner's manuals here too. Look in the left hand column for "Request owner's and parts manuals." Don't be discouraged by the questionnaire — most of the time they have a .PDF of what you want and you can print it right there. They even have interactive operator's manuals online for many products.

Who else is now supplying this service? Take a look at [www.kohler.com](http://www.kohler.com). Kohler offers owner's manuals and even a number of service manuals online. These service manuals include all the necessary preventive maintenance charts to keep their engines in top condition.

These are just a couple examples. Every day, more manufacturers make it easier for us to get detailed information about the maintenance and repair of their products.

Parts diagrams and service manuals are out on the Internet and even burned on CDs just waiting for you. Knowledge is truly power. Now you can have the power.

— *The author is the turf equipment professor at Lake City Community College, Lake City, FL. If you have suggestions about what you would like to see him discuss in this regular feature, contact him at [smithh@lakecitycc.edu](mailto:smithh@lakecitycc.edu).*



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# Over the airwaves

## Going from wired to radio-controlled made irrigation a practical solution at Highlands Ranch

BY STEVE UNGER

**H**ighlands Ranch, CO, is a 22,000-acre master planned community conceived and developed to provide an exceptional quality of life. Located 12 miles south of Denver, it features new neighborhoods of beautiful homes and apartments within an outstanding school district, and it offers an unprecedented range of green spaces and facilities that cater to its residents' active lifestyles. These include parks, ball fields, playgrounds, hiking/biking trails and much more.

"Our residents literally do everything here — tennis, football, baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse and even rugby," says Rick Schultz, Operations Administrator of the Metro Districts of Highlands Ranch Parks, Recreation and Open Space.

"We have 19 parks right now, with a total of 25 planned," Schultz explains. "We have a few more to be built. It's really quite large."

### Testing the airwaves

From its earliest days, Highlands Ranch developers anticipated the need for a good



Hand-held radios allow changes in the field to be uploaded to the central computer.

integrated irrigation system. However, their original central control system was hard-wired, which posed problems. Bob Claiborne, Parkways Supervisor for the Metro Districts, made the decision to go with a radio control system.

"We had miles of wires running from our shop where the computer was located out to these controllers at different points in the fields," recalls Schultz. "You can imagine the problems that we had. Our community was growing rapidly with a tremendous amount of new construction work coming in — pipelines, water lines, phone lines, electric lines — so our wires were constantly being dug up and broken. Because of that, the irrigation system never worked



the way it was intended. Finally, we said, 'Let's go with radio control,' and they came in and made it work."

Since the early '90s, Highlands Ranch has depended on the Toro Sentinel System, an advanced central-control system that provides a range of modular options. Using hand-held radios and field satellites, this system allows two-way communication so changes in the field can

be uploaded to the central computer.

In the stand-alone mode, users can program map-to-assembly satellites within radio reception to manually turn stations on/off, initiate a program or perform shutdown. The system at Highlands Ranch commands a network of 160 field satellite controllers.



"The savings in time and manpower alone are incredible," says Schultz. "With the remote programming capability, you can easily respond to changing weather conditions to increase or decrease the amount of water applied. Think of the labor it would take to drive around and adjust and readjust those 160 controllers if we weren't on a central control system."

"The radio remote is an amazing tool," he adds. "And from a maintenance standpoint, now one technician with a radio can do the same work that two technicians out there used to do."

Being able to adjust irrigation controllers so quickly naturally pays dividends in water conservation and cost-savings.

"The system has really helped us de-

crease the amount of water we use," Schultz explains. "Colorado has been in a fairly significant drought for the last three to five years, and the central control system has allowed us to respond and to apply the most appropriate amounts of water. Even though we've continued to grow here, and we've gotten bigger and bigger over the last five years, we've actually decreased our irrigation."

Special Toro software links the control system directly to an onsite weather station, and it automatically polls the weather station to provide daily updates on rain values and ET (evapotranspiration) values for that day. Optionally, this ET value can be



Time intensive planting beds require a top-notch irrigation system.

automatically downloaded to the field satellites at a time designated by the user.

"We've really come to like that," Schultz says. "The most useful weather information for us is the rain and ET values. We use those values to adjust the system to prevailing weather conditions. Now we don't have to monitor it, and the Sentinel

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software monitors it for us every day and sends it to us in an e-mail."

Additionally, depending on factors such as geography, soil type and plant material, each zone can be set to automatically use a little more or a little less water than indicated by the actual ET value. This allows for the maximum in water savings, while still insuring that all areas get exactly the amount of water they need.

**Covering all the bases**

Obviously, Highlands Ranch presents many special challenges simply because of its size and complexity.

"As far as the total number of units and the total area served, I can certainly say we're one of the largest users (Toro Sen-



Soccer fields are just one of many areas benefitting from radio-controlled irrigation.

tinel system)," Schultz adds. Highlands Ranch was also one of the earliest users of the system, and the input of Claiborne and Schultz over the years has been extremely

valuable in helping to improve it.

"We can look at several of the features, and several things this system does, and point to it and say, 'They have that because of us,'" says Schultz. "We didn't necessarily help develop it, but we were a driving force."

Because the central control system provides significant savings in labor, water, time and trouble, contractors are using it in a variety of larger installations including sports complexes, parks, school districts, airports and corporate campuses.

"I tell people it's just a great system," Schultz sums up. "It'll do everything they ever wanted it to do, and more." **LM**

— The author writes for Canyon Communications, Mesa, AZ.  
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# Hurricane cleanup tools

BY CURT HARLER



## Storm cleanup tips

- ▶ Safety first. Examine job sites for hazards, like down wires, before doing anything.
- ▶ Keep workers hydrated. Remember, coffee keeps you awake but also dehydrates anyone doing hard labor. Stick to water or sport drinks.
- ▶ Take care of regular customers first, but keep in mind this is a good time to expand your base.
- ▶ Don't neglect equipment maintenance in the rush to get work done.
- ▶ Be sure your local dealership knows what kind of equipment and parts you'll need before everyone else comes calling.
- ▶ Take your time. The job will get done. Fatigue and haste cause accidents.

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## Stihl

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For more information contact Stihl at 800/467-8445 or [www.stihlusa.com](http://www.stihlusa.com) / circle no. 262

## Poulan

With its 33cc, 2.0-cu.-in., low-emission engine, the Poulan 2055LE weighs 10.5 lbs. Saw has a 14-in. bar length and takes a 91VJP chain. Operational features include a dual counterweight crankshaft, gear-driven automatic chain oiler, inertia chain brake and primer bulb for easy starting. Full wrap handle increases control and comfort.

For more information contact Poulan at 800/554-6723 or [www.poulan-pro.com](http://www.poulan-pro.com) / circle no. 263



## Jonsered

Choose from a lineup of three powerful Turbo saws including the distinctive 49cc CS2150 and the 45cc CS2145, both with side-mounted chain tensioner, and also the 41cc CS2141. Saws feature a vibration dampening system for more operator comfort and a slim, well-balanced, ergonomic design. An innovative combined choke/start control makes the choke more instinctive.

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For more information contact Vermeer at 888/837-6337 or [www.vermeer.com/](http://www.vermeer.com/) circle no. 265



### Tanaka

The ECV4501 has a 43cc, 2.5-hp 2-stroke engine with vertical cylinder that provides power to do job fast. Decompression System enables quick and easy starts by simply pulling out the choke/trigger lock and going. The Oregon bar and chain combination provides excellent cutting performance and helps reduce kickback. An innovative air filtration system removes more particles from the air intake system for increased performance and engine life. With 1-year professional warranty, plus five years on electronic ignition module.

For more information contact Tanaka at 253/333-1200 or [www.tanaka-usa.com/](http://www.tanaka-usa.com/) circle no. 266

### Deere

The Deere chain saw series includes the CS36 and CS40 Lightweight Professional saws, and the CS46 (pictured) professional saw. The CS46 has a 45cc, 3.1-hp engine and the CS52 has a 51.7cc, 3.4-hp engine. It accommodates 16- to 18-in. bars and .325 chisel chains. The CS46 has a powerhead weight of 10.8 lbs. Its no-oil-at-idle feature reduces consumption and keeps the environment cleaner.

For more information contact John Deere at 800/537-8233 or [www.johndeere.com/](http://www.johndeere.com/) circle no. 267

### Husqvarna ▶

The Husqvarna 338XPT, equipped with an efficient 2.3-hp engine, is extra light and maneuverable. Recommended for bar lengths of 12 to 16 inches, the 338XPT offers features such as the Smart Start system, the LowVib anti-vibration



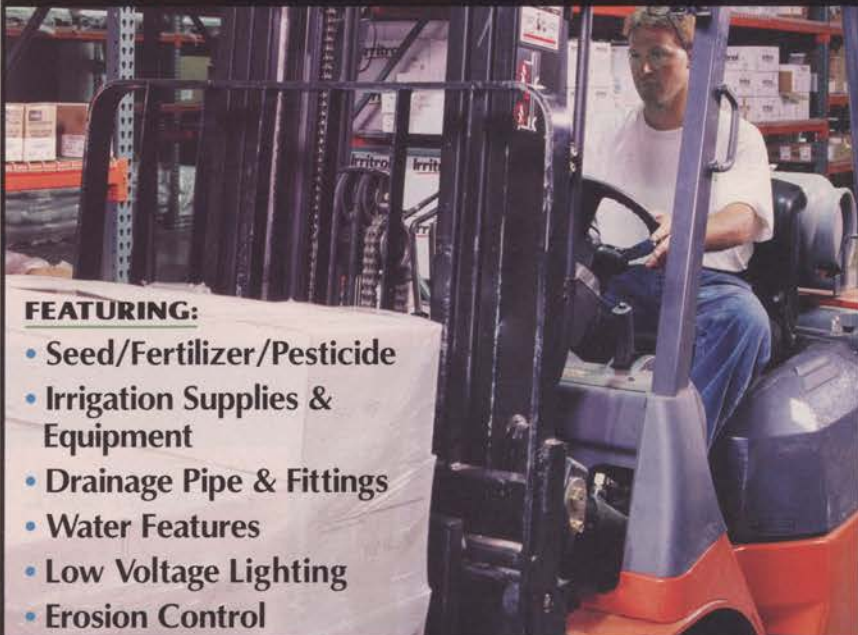
system, and Air Injection system which removes up to 97% of dust before it enters the filter.

For more information contact Husqvarna at 800/487-5962 or [www.husqvarna.com/](http://www.husqvarna.com/) circle no. 268

### Fairmont-Greenlee

HCS816 family of chain saws is ideal for trimming damaged limbs. Adjust the reduced-kick-back bar and chain without removing the sprocket cover. Unit weighs 6.7 lbs. Its handle position can be oriented horizontal, 60 or 30

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## Little Wonder

High-Output blowers move yard debris, standing water and other litter. Curved, aerodynamic inlet draws air in smoothly around inlet area ensuring adequate intake. Made of 12-gauge steel, units come with optional 10-in. intake hose and either a disposal bag or 20-ft. discharge machine. Models range from 5-hp to 11-hp 911HO.

For more information contact Little Wonder at 877/596-6337 or [www.littlewonder.com](http://www.littlewonder.com) / circle no. 271

## Echo

The CS-8000 chain saw comes standard with 24-in. bar and chain. There are 20-, 27-, 32- and 36-in. bars optional. It works for a long



time with its 27.7 oz. fuel capacity and features an automatic oiler with manual override. The unit weighs 16.3 lbs.

For more information contact Echo at 800/673-1558 or [www.echo-usa.com](http://www.echo-usa.com) / circle no. 272

## Bandit

The new Model 65XL Brush Bandit hand fed chipper features hydraulic feed, 6-in. diameter capacity. Heavier than the two models it replaces, it can easily chip 6-in. diameter and



forked material with limited trimming. The 270-degree discharge spout aims chips in virtually any direction and ensures fully loaded chip trucks. Numerous gas and diesel engine options are available. Unit offers wider in-feed hopper to accommodate forked limbs and branches, and heavier in-feed throat and feed-wheel yoke.

For more information contact Bandit Industries at 800/952-0178 or [www.banditchippers.com](http://www.banditchippers.com) / circle no. 273

## Mackissic

Merry Mac SC183-16E pull-behind chipper/shredder is a 2-wheel, highway-towable model. Powered by a 16-hp Briggs & Stratton Vanguard motor, it has electrical start for easy use. Unit can chip up to 4.5 in. and shred material to 1.5 in. Two knives and 48 hammers do the work.

For more information contact Merry Mac at 800/348-1117 or [www.mackissic.com](http://www.mackissic.com) / circle no. 274





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### Efco Power Equipment

The Efco 952 chain saw is a 3.15-cu.-in., 51.7-cc unit with anti-vibration and compression release. Saw includes air-purge primer. The 952 can be used with 16- or 18-in. bars. The saw weighs 11 lbs.

For more information contact Efco at 800/447-1152 or [www.tiltonequipment.com/](http://www.tiltonequipment.com/) circle no. 275



### Remington ▲

Cleanup alternative to manual pole pruners, the Branch Wizard features a powerful 6.0-amp motor. The 6-in. bar cuts branches up to six inches thick. In-line power head design provides improved visibility of the cutting surface, and allows for better maneuverability and access in trees. Eliminates ladder-climbing with a chain saw to cut limbs up to 12-ft. high while operator stands firmly on the ground. Also available, PoleSaw Wizard with 10-in. bar and chain and 1.5-peak hp, 6-amp motor.

For more information contact Remington at 800/858-8501 or [www.desaint.com/](http://www.desaint.com/) circle no. 276

### RedMax

The GZ4000 is the first chain saw powered by the company's popular Strato-Charged engine. It meets 2005 EPA and CARB standards without the need for a hot, heavy catalytic muffler.



The 40.1-cc engine is rated at 2.45 hp with a maximum speed of 13,000 RPM. Features the dust-free system, which prevents sawdust from clogging the engine intake. Choose 14, 16 or 18-in. bar. Weighs 9.67 lbs.

For more information contact RedMax at 800/291-8251 or [www.redmax.com/](http://www.redmax.com/) circle no. 277

### Shindaiwa

New commercial-grade chain saw, the 285s is based on the Shindaiwa 300s. At 28.5 cc displacement and 1.7 hp, the small-displacement, high-performance 285s has an inertia chain brake system, dual bar studs, easy pull



Sure Start recoil starting system. Comes standard with both a nylon mesh air filter for damp climates, and a flocked air filter for dry, dusty conditions. It's available in 12- or 14-in. bar lengths.

For more information contact Shindaiwa at 800/521-7733 or [www.shindaiwa.com/](http://www.shindaiwa.com/) circle no. 278

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Circle 127



# Landscape irrigation at **CROSS**roads

## ASIC members poised to help the Green Industry meet growing irrigation challenges

BY JAMES BARRETT

**O**ver the past 20 years, landscape irrigation has evolved from a luxury to a necessity... and for many good reasons.

During this time, every region of the United States has had to learn the harsh realities of drought conditions. As a result, the more progressive state agencies and water districts are planning for the inevitable, and doing so requires the input of irrigation professionals.

Owners and operators of virtually any facility that maintains grounds seek solutions to preserve turf aesthetics and per-

formance in the face of the challenges that Mother Nature brings their way. And as residential water use restrictions become increasingly common, the public is realizing that water is not to be taken for granted.

### A finite resource

Also driving the growth of our industry and the American Society of Irrigation Consultants (ASIC) is the realization among end users of the escalating costs of water usage and the need to find alternative water resources. Remember, there's a finite amount of water on this earth. Growing demand requires that water be used and managed as efficiently as possible.

Huge inefficiencies and waste result from poorly designed and installed irrigation systems. The fact is that you'll waste water without a professionally designed system; it's that simple.

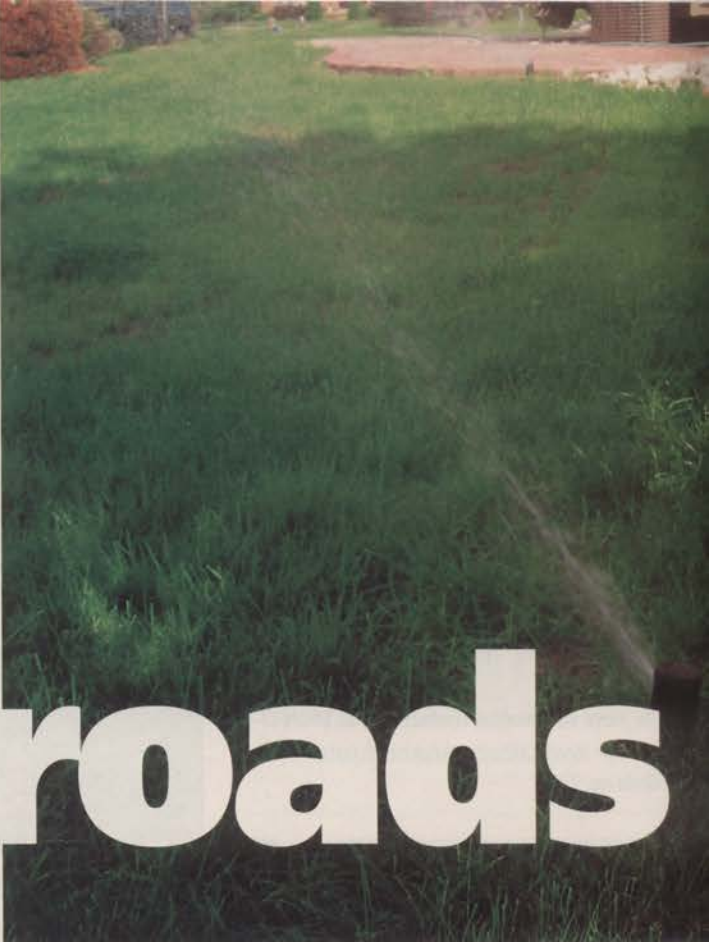
The amount being spent on construction of irrigation systems produced by the professional members of ASIC exceeds \$712 million, up more than 30% from five years ago. This will increase as needs rise in the irrigation of golf and sports turf, public works, and commercial and residential real estate development, among others.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), a non-profit group formed to create standards for high performance buildings, has set requirements for water efficient landscaping, creating new opportunities for the irrigation consultant prepared to meet exacting standards.

### Knowledge on the rise

Those of us who have devoted many years to this profession are gratified to see the growing body of industry knowledge and increasingly high standards governing our business. As customers' expectations rise, so must our capabilities. The exchange of ideas and interaction among ASIC members contributes to our collective efforts to raise the performance bar.

At the same time, irrigation is making its way into college-level programs, which speaks to the profession's growing popularity, importance and sophistication. In some circles, we've been able to abolish the myth that irrigation systems waste water. If irrigation is wasting water, then it's because someone bought a bad design or doesn't know how to operate the system, or both. Independent professional irrigation consultants can prevent that from happening.







Today, the professional members of ASIC combine a broad and firm grasp of environmental and soil sciences. They are up to date with the changing regulations and requirements and offer total mastery of the irrigation equipment and technologies being produced by world-class manufacturers in our field.

#### Pressing challenges

Ironically, the growth and success of the industry have also created some of our most pressing challenges. In some states, efforts are underway to prohibit irrigation consultants from

practicing without a license. Have we placed as much emphasis as we should have on educating legislators and regulators at every level about the very things that our customers know so well — that irrigation is the solution, not the problem? It requires a great deal of experience, skills and technical expertise to produce a quality irrigation solution that conserves energy, water and money.

We're not just talking hoses and sprinklers here, although that's the impression of some of the people that aren't knowledgeable about our industry.

There's a chance we'll be penalized for this lack of understanding among key influencers who don't know what we do or the value we offer. Reaching out to these individuals — one on one if that's what it takes — and explaining who we are is a top priority for us. We're prepared to pursue licensing of irrigation consultants if that's what it takes. Based on legitimate criteria, licensing will only protect the end user, and we're all for that. **LM**

— *The author is past president of ASIC and can be contacted at [jba.irr@comcast.net](mailto:jba.irr@comcast.net).*

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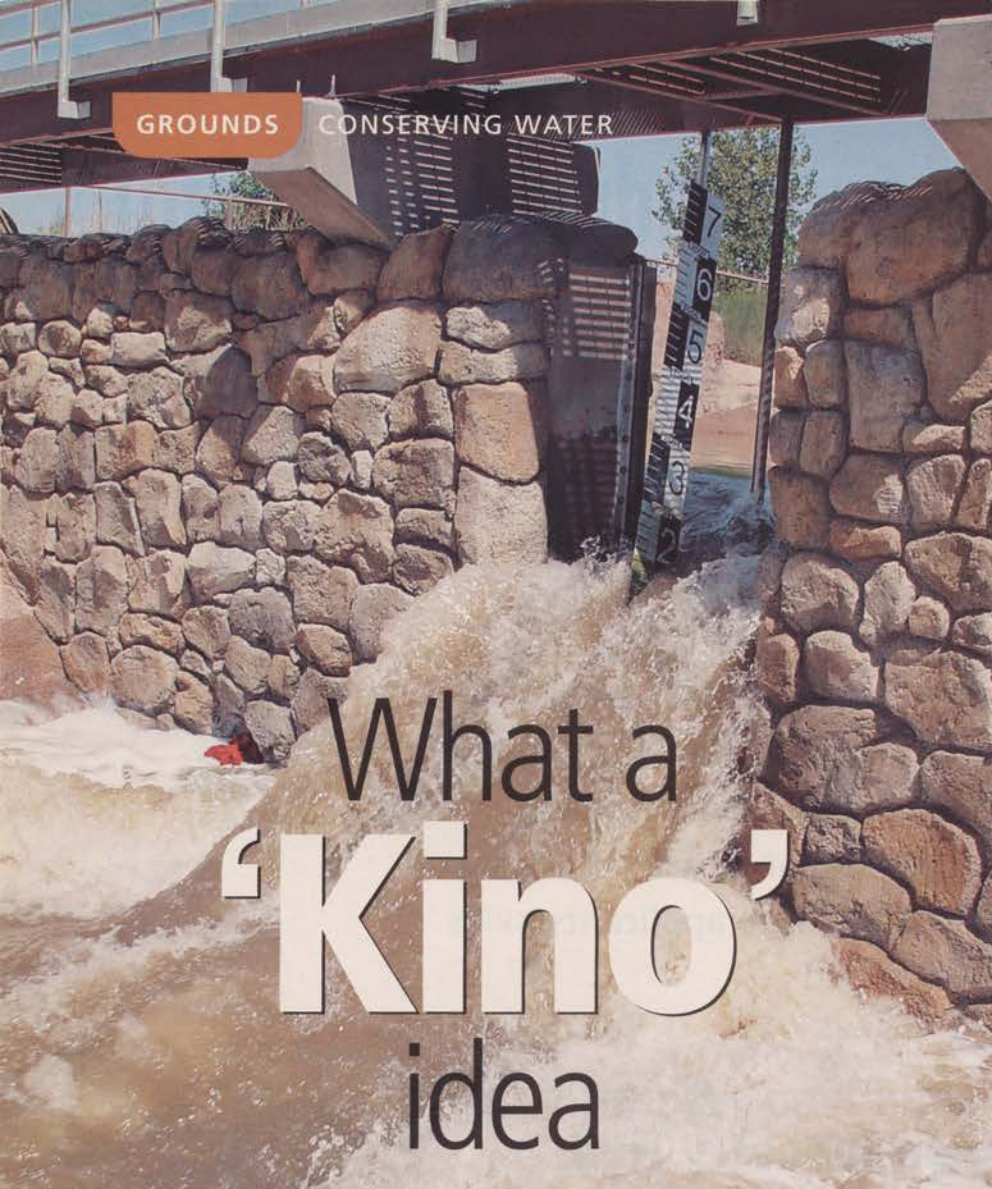
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# What a ‘Kino’ idea

## Tucson sports park reduces water costs 90% by harvesting and reusing storm water

BY GEORGE WITTERSCHEIN

**A**sports stadium in the Arizona desert irrigates nine pristine baseball fields and part of the surrounding neighborhood at less than a tenth of the cost it used to pay. It does this without drawing a single drop of potable water from the county water utility.

“Not possible,” you say. After all, we’re talking southern Arizona here. Cactusville. A region that averages 12 in. of rain a year.

But that’s precisely what’s happening at the Kino Sports Complex in Tucson. David

Wise, the trade maintenance supervisor in charge of irrigation and baseball fields, says that Kino used to pay the local water utility about \$1,000 per acre foot for drinking-quality water to use on its baseball fields. (Kino is the facility where the Major League Baseball Arizona Diamondbacks and Chicago White Sox conduct spring training. It’s also home to the AAA baseball team Sidewinders.)

“It finally occurred to us that there might be another source of water we could use,” says Wise. “We were both surprised and delighted when another source of water developed.”

And Wise, in spite of growing up in Lansing, MI and earning a degree in horticulture from Michigan State University, knows deserts and water scarcity. He first came to Tucson while serving at the Davis Monthan Air Force base. He also spent five years of military duty in the Middle East.

He has been maintaining much of Kino since it was opened seven years ago, but it wasn’t until about four years ago that Pima County looked to establish a water reclamation/conservation project there. Officials realized that they had a sizeable supply of available storm overflow water in a large catchment known as the “Basin.” So they began looking into ways to take advantage of that water that they could capture and reuse in that 17-square-mile area.

### Big, big project

They realized that the Basin water could be used and more widely available if someone constructed channels. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers moved in and designed the project, and Stronghold Engineering, based in California, spent three years building the project under Corps supervision. The Corps even paid for the project after local congressman Ed Pastor interceded on the county’s behalf.

As a result, Kino now pays just \$90 an acre foot for the water it receives from the county. The sports complex uses the recycled water to irrigate most of its sports fields, including its eight baseball practice fields and its parks & recreation fields open to public use. The Major League fields and berm seating are still irrigated with potable water for safety reasons.

Kino relies upon a Rain Bird Maxi-Com irrigation system to distribute the water, says Wise. The system is connected to a several weather stations that calculate evapotranspiration (ET). This “tells” the system just how much water to use for turf health. By measuring and recording the amount of water the field requires,



## The water problem defined

Wise says he can more easily defend Kino's water use.

While the upside of Kino's irrigation practices include the price of water and just plain old environmental good citizenship, Kino realizes a number of other benefits from this:

► **Enhancement of public image.** The sports complex is now setting an example. "We hope people think if a major league sports stadium can get by with reclaimed water, maybe we can too," Wise observes. In addition, there's local beautification. Kino is located in a residential neighborhood well within Tucson, and the water channels leading from the Basin to the Sports Complex are now lined with riparian trees that would have been previously impossible in the

You may be thinking, "I'm not in the Southwest, and besides, none of my customers are sports parks. Therefore, water issues aren't as important to me as they are in this case study."

Think again. Water supply and quality are among the big coming issues of the 21st century. Everywhere.

Irrigation product supplier Rain Bird, Inc., issued a "White Paper" this year. It lays out the challenge facing all of us concerning an impending shortage of fresh water.

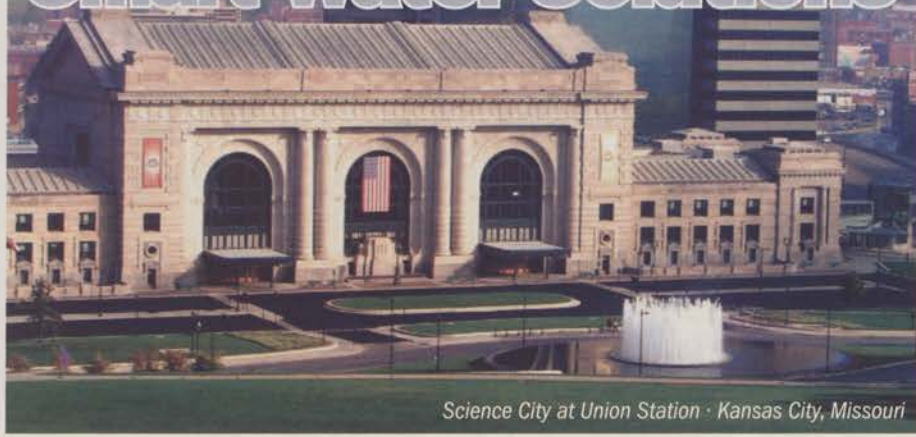
"Most of the world's water problems arise from a basic conflict," the paper says. "The global water supply is fixed, while the world population and its water consumption is growing. Despite many earlier alarms, this issue is finally gaining

the attention of the general public." And of landscapers, we hasten to add.

The basic problem: "To the casual observer, water seems to be the most abundant resource available on Earth. The reality is that 97% of all water is salt-water, 2% is held in snow and icebergs and only 1% is freshwater (the only portion currently useable for human consumption). Earth's freshwater is continually being recycled as it evaporates and returns to the Earth in the form of rain, snow and ice. Most of this 'fallen' water evaporates immediately, pours into inaccessible areas, or flows into oceans before it can be retrieved. Only about 10% of total rainfall on earth is retrievable for use by humans. Of that percentage, only

*continued on page 70*

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water-starved Southwest that gets about 12 inches of rain annually.

► **Transparency.** No one, sports spectators and athletes alike, seems to notice any difference between the areas irrigated with Basin water and the parts of the complex that still receive potable water irrigation. This is important because Kino is the spring training home of the Chicago White Sox and the Arizona Diamondbacks, and the principal home of the Tucson Sidewinders. With this professional baseball presence, turf quality is not negotiable — it's got to be high.

"The entire experience of the Basin project has been overwhelmingly positive," Wise reports. "The only thing you could remotely call a negative is the amount of

*continued from page 69*

40% (or 4% of total rainfall) is ultimately used." If that were ominous enough.

And while the supply is fixed, the demand is exploding. "An exponentially growing number of people are tapping into the Earth's finite water supply. Earth's pre-historic population, some 5,500 years ago, is estimated to have been less than 10 million. By 2000, it grew to 6.1 billion, and by 2030, the world's population is estimated to reach 8 billion."

The problem is not limited to the Third World either. Even in the less densely populated United States, pressures are also mounting, in part due to

paperwork we have to complete in our regulatory compliance to various government agencies.

"Considering all the upsides to this project, especially given the impending worldwide water crisis, I can't believe that

demand generated by the U.S. lifestyle: "In the United States, 40% of available water is used in industrial applications. Historically, technology and lifestyle improvements have led to the doubling of water consumption every 20 years... Since 1900, the U.S. population has doubled, but per capita water use has increased eightfold. Most urban users far exceed the estimated 20.5 gallons per day minimum that each person needs to maintain life, hygiene and food production. On average, residents in the U.S. use 101 gallons per day."

To obtain a copy of the White Paper, call 800/724-6247 or visit [www.rainbird.com](http://www.rainbird.com).

there is a sports complex anywhere in the country that wouldn't benefit from knowing about our experience," he concludes. **LM**

— *The author is a veteran business writer who loves to report on the Green Industry. He can be reached at [grbwitt@aol.com](mailto:grbwitt@aol.com).*



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## Lubbers Stadium

2003 PGMS Honor Award Winner for Park, Recreation Area or Athletic Field

### Property at a glance

- Location:** Allendale, MI
- Grounds Supervisor:** Ken Stanton, Grand Valley State University
- Category:** Park, Recreation Area or Athletic Field
- Total budget:** \$20,850
- Year site built:** 1979
- Acres of turf:** Two
- Acres of woody ornamentals:** n/a
- Acres of display beds:** n/a
- Total paved area:** n/a
- Total man-hours/week:** 25-35

### Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Snow removal on football playing field
- ▶ Mowing of bermed areas around stadium
- ▶ Events cleanup

### Project checklist

- Completed in last two years:
- ▶ Re-sodding football field
  - ▶ Installing stadium lighting
  - ▶ Constructing weightlifting building

### On the job

- ▶ 2 full-time staff, 2 student workers, 1 licensed pesticide applicator

**G**rand Valley State University's Lubbers Stadium was a sight to behold when it was completed in the summer of 1979. But excessive wear took its toll, and the field was completely re-sodded in 2001.

Maintaining the field during the snowy months of November is no day of tobogganing. In 2002, GVSU hosted three play-off games as a wet snow fell onto the players . . . and the turf. Stanton covered the field prior to each game. Snow had fallen on the tarps the week before the games, so the ground staff had to remove the snow from the tarps, remove the tarps (with help from 40 baseball and football players), topdress and line paint the field and finally replace the tarps on the field. Whew, that was a lot of heavy lifting and tugging.

Grounds Supervisor Ken Stanton, who is in charge of the rest of the campus as well, makes sure everything runs smoothly. To tackle the cleanup of the seating and surrounding areas following games, he contracts with a student group equipped with backpack blowers, brooms, trash bags and a



Grounds Supervisor Ken Stanton (left) oversaw the resurfacing of the football playing field.

vehicle to transport away the garbage.

The task of mowing the steep bermed areas that surround the stadium seating falls to student workers employed by the grounds department. The students get detailed safety training prior to the task. They use push mowers and walk-behinds.

Editors' note: *Landscape Management* is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscapes. The 2004 winners will be named at the annual meeting of the Professional Grounds Management Society in November. For more information on the 2003 awards, contact PGMS at: 720 Light St. • Baltimore, MD 21230





The finished product (above) is something Stanton, his crew and Grand Valley State University can be proud of.



A variety of maintenance activities require a vast array of sophisticated machinery to successfully care for the field.





# Products

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## Cut it up

Deere Pro-Series chain saws are designed for easy use, low vibration and aggressive torque at all speeds. Four in the series boast power-to-weight ratios that are among the best in class: CS56 and CS62 heavy-duty professional saws and CS71 and CS81 professional saws. CS56 has a 56.5cc, 4.1-hp engine and the CS62 has a 61.5cc, 4.7-hp engine. It takes 16- to 20-in. bars and .325-in. chisel chains. The CS56 has a 12.6-lb. powerhead.

For more information contact John Deere at 800/537-8233 or [www.johndeere.com](http://www.johndeere.com) / circle no. 250

## Spread it out

Lanco Manufacturing introduces its new LS1750 fertilizer spreader with a 5-ton capacity, 11-gauge stainless steel hopper. The use of non-corrosive #304 stainless steel in the hopper, web conveyor, dual spinners, and mid and rear cross members provides the most durable construction in the industry. Standard features include a heavy-duty vinyl hopper cover and tires suitable for field use. Transport lighting, surge brakes and roadworthy tires are available as options.

For more information contact Lanco Manufacturing at 717/944-1841 / circle no. 251



## Tear it to shreds

Shredding organic waste is simplified with the Bobcat brush chipper attachment, which is approved for skid-steer loaders, compact track loaders, all-wheel steer loaders, and the Toolcat 5600 utility work machine. It has excellent operator visibility and ease of loading. The chipper

## Throw big snow

Upgrades on Ariens Company's Sno-Thro for 2005 line include: 14-in. impeller vs. 12-in. impeller for improved performance. 26-in. vs. 24-in. housing brings in more snow. 12-gauge sides on the housing cut through heavier snow. New heavy-duty XS Gear Case for extreme snow conditions. High-profile steel chute and remote cap deflector standard on most machines to provide easy control to put the snow into a precise location. Quick-turn chute crank provides side-to-side chute rotation with only 2.5 turns to change directions quickly and easily. Standard drift cutters are included on all machines and allow for easy setup in the heaviest snow conditions; these are optional accessories on most competitive models.

For more information contact Ariens at 800/678-5443 or [www.ariens.com](http://www.ariens.com) / circle no. 252



attachment grinds branches and tree limbs with up to 35 hp of chipping performance, and reduces branch volume 10-to-1. When mounted on a loader or utility work machine, the chipper can reach tight or remote working conditions that larger equipment may not access.

For more information contact Bobcat at 866/823-7898 or [www.bobcat.com](http://www.bobcat.com) / circle no. 253

## Let it snow

Sidewing Snowplows brings the proven benefits of wing plows to your pickup or light-duty dump truck. The newest model 345 OSL moves up to 12 ft. of snow in each pass and clears a 2-lane road with only one pass in each direction. It mounts completely under the truck bed and leaves the dump or flatbed usable.

For more information contact Sidewing Snowplows at 866/755-2244 or [www.sidewing.net](http://www.sidewing.net) / circle no. 254

## Saw away

At only 35.2cc displacement with 2.5 hp, the 352 has a Walbro all-position carburetor and an integrated choke/fast idle interlock mechanism. Comes with inertia chain brake system, dual bar studs, easy pull Sure Start recoil



starting system, thumb-screw access on air filter cover, professional anti-vibration system, and is available in 14- or 16-in. bar lengths.

For more information contact Shindaiwa at 800/521-7733 or [www.shindaiwa.com](http://www.shindaiwa.com) / circle no. 255

## Fast fire ant destroyer

DuPont Professional Products says its new Advion Fire Ant Bait controls imported red fire ants within 24 to 72 hours after application. The product (a.i. indoxacarb) received EPA approval in late August. The product's fast action results from the metabolic activation of indoxacarb by developing larvae within the colony. The activated metabolite is then distributed to other members of the colony, including the queen. Control occurs quickly because



the metabolite disrupts the insect's nervous system. Application sites for Advion include home lawns, golf courses, commercial and recreational turf, parks, picnic areas, roadsides, campgrounds and a wide range of industrial and institutional sites. The product is available in 25-lb. and 2-lb. jugs.

For more information contact DuPont at 888/638-7668 or [www.proproducts.dupont.com](http://www.proproducts.dupont.com) / circle no. 256

### Gravely's new Z

Gravely's new 44Z zero-turn mower features a 44-in. cutting width and a 17-hp Kawasaki twin engine. Additional features include a 7-



gauge cutting deck with spindle reinforcement, maintenance free spindles, and Hydro-gear commercial pumps and wheel motors. The 44Z can operate at 9 mph forward speed and has a 7-gal. fuel capacity.

For more information contact Gravely at 800/472-8359 or [www.gravely.com](http://www.gravely.com) / circle no. 257

### Dig it

Yanmar now offers seven maneuverable, easy-to-transport compact excavators. All models feature true zero-tail swing and left and right boom swing so operators can track adjacent walls. Large dozing blades coupled with Yanmar's VICTAS offset track design provide class-leading stability without increasing track width. Bucket changes are made easy with Yanmar's hydraulic quick-coupler system, right from the cab. A 3-pump hydraulic system, control pattern selector and dual auxiliary PTO for attachments



are also standard on the ViO series.

For more information contact Yanmar at 847/541-1900 / circle no. 258

### Ferris IS 3000ZXL arrives

Ferris Industries adds the new IS 3000ZXL, with a 26-hp Kawasaki liquid-cooled V-Twin engine, to its line of mid-size zero-turns. Along with the exclusive 4-wheel IS Independent Suspension (increasing production by as much as 14% over fixed-frame units), it's available with a 61-in. cutting deck. The drive train features high-capacity, fan-cooled hydraulic pumps and large-displacement wheel motors to ensure long-term durability. Additional features of IS 3000ZXL include Ferris Hercules spindles, easy-to-use deck lift, new flexible discharge chute, new cast-iron rear suspension A-arms and a



comfortable operator environment pairing a deluxe high back seat with lumbar support and a redesigned ergonomic control panel.

For more information contact Ferris at [www.ferrisindustries.com](http://www.ferrisindustries.com) / circle no. 259

### Two smaller Cats

Caterpillar's new C0.7 and C0.5 models are the two smallest in a family of seven compact engines the company now offers to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding small machinery market. The product range is from 14 to 60 hp

at 3600 rpm. The new C0.7 model is a 3-cylinder engine of 0.7 liters with a rated output of 20.5 hp at 3600 rpm. The C0.5 is a 2-cylinder engine of 0.5 liters producing 13.7 hp. All new Cat engine models provide increases in power and torque of up to 8-10% respectively over previous models, and offer reduced noise at low idle speed of up to 5dB (A). Together, these elements drive down installation cost where sound attenuation is concerned and improve operator comfort. The new Cat engines meet Tier 2, Stage II emissions requirements. Running at low levels of smoke, the engine range operates to a level of gaseous emission beyond what's required. Market acceptance of Cat's compact engine series is set to continue, even with new Tier 3/Stage IIIa emissions legislation.

For more information contact Caterpillar at [www.cat.com](http://www.cat.com) / circle no. 260

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Because of activists, extremists and misinformed politicians, consumers are questioning whether the products and resources (such as water) used to care for their lawns, landscapes and other green spaces are a waste—or a harm to the environment. Yes, legislation and regulations have been throwing the green industry some rough punches. And we're about to start fighting back.

Project EverGreen is an alliance of green industry associations, companies and professionals dedicated to educate the public, protect the green industry and grow our business. It was created in response to unfavorable regulations in many parts of the United States and Canada. If the services our industry professionals offer are restricted, regulated or made illegal, everyone will lose revenue and customers.

Help Project EverGreen educate consumers on the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of green spaces. To make a contribution, volunteer your time or find out more information, call **1-877-758-4835** or visit **[www.projectevergreen.com](http://www.projectevergreen.com)**.



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 290  Sports Complexes    295  Parks    305  Schools, Colleges & Universities  
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 365  Dealers, Distributors, Formulators & Brokers    370  Manufacturers  
     850  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Which of the following best describes your title? (Fill in ONE only)**  
 10  **Executive/Administrator** - President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Director of Physical Plant  
 20  **Manager/Superintendent** - Arborist, Architect, Landscape/Grounds Manager, Superintendent, Foreman, Supervisor  
 30  **Government Official** - Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official  
 40  **Specialist** - Forester, Consultant, Agronomist, Pilot, Instructor, Researcher, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist  
 50  **Other Titled and Non-Titled Personnel** (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Which of the following services does your company provide? (Fill in ALL that apply)**  
**MAINTENANCE/SERVICES**  
 A  Mowing                      F  Turf Fertilization                      C  Tree Care  
 B  Turf Insect Control        D  Turf Aeration                              L  Pond/Lake Care  
 J  Turf Weed Control        E  Irrigation Services                      N  Snow Removal  
 G  Turf Disease Control      H  Ornamental Care                      O  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
**DESIGN/BUILD**  
 I  Landscape Design                      M  Landscape Installation                      P  Irrigation Installation  
 K  Paving/Deck/Patio Installation    Q  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Type of customer served? (Fill in ONE ONLY)**  
 A  Commercial    B  Residential    C  Both

**5. Which of the following landscape products do you purchase or specify? (Fill in ALL that apply)**  
 B  Blowers                      H  Herbicides                      Y  Ornamental/Nursery Products                      P  Tractors  
 C  Chain Saws                      I  Insecticides                      Z  Pavers/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks                      Q  Truck Trailers/Attachments  
 U  Engines                      W  Irrigation Systems                      (Hardscape Materials)                      R  Trucks  
 V  Erosion Control                      X  Landscape Lighting                      3  Seed/Sod                      S  Turfseed  
 F  Fertilizers                      J  Line Trimmers                      1  Skid Steers                      T  Utility Vehicles  
 G  Fungicides                      K  Mowers                      N  Spreaders                      2  Water Features

**6. My firm's annual revenue is: (Fill in ONE only)**  
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- 800  Other Contractors/Service Companies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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- 290  Sports Complexes
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- 305  Schools, Colleges & Universities
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- J  Turf Weed Control
- G  Turf Disease Control
- F  Turf Fertilization
- D  Turf Aeration
- E  Irrigation Services
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- C  Tree Care
- L  Pond/Lake Care
- N  Snow Removal
- O  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**DESIGN/BUILD**

- I  Landscape Design
- K  Paving/Deck/Patio Installation
- M  Landscape Installation
- Q  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- P  Irrigation Installation

404RS

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- C  Chain Saws
- U  Engines
- V  Erosion Control
- F  Fertilizers
- G  Fungicides
- H  Herbicides
- I  Insecticides
- W  Irrigation Systems
- X  Landscape Lighting
- J  Line Trimmers
- K  Mowers
- Y  Ornamental/Nursery Products
- Z  Pavers/Masonry/Bricks/Rocks
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- 3  Seed/Sod
- 1  Skid Steers
- N  Spreaders
- P  Tractors
- Q  Truck Trailers/Attachments
- R  Trucks
- S  Turfseed
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- B  \$1,500,000-\$1,999,999
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### 8-9 Pesticide Resistance

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800/431-0066;  
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### 5-7 Minnesota Green Expo /

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[www.minnesotagreenexpo.com](http://www.minnesotagreenexpo.com)

### 11-13 Eastern Pennsylvania

Turf Conference / King of Prussia,  
PA; 814/355-1912

### 11-13 Congress 2005:

International Horticultural  
Trade Show / Toronto; 800/265-  
5656; [www.locongress.com](http://www.locongress.com)

### 12 Wisconsin Nursery

Association Winter Workshop /  
Kohler, WI; 414/529-4705

### 12-14 ProGreen EXPO / Denver,

CO; 303/756-1079; [www.pro-greenexpo.com](http://www.pro-greenexpo.com)

### 16-18 INLA 2005 Annual

Convention & Trade Show /  
Des Moines, IA; 816/233-1481;  
[www.iowanla.org](http://www.iowanla.org)

### 17-20 Turfgrass Industry Expo /

Winston-Salem, NC; 910/695-  
1333; [www.ncturfgrass.org](http://www.ncturfgrass.org)

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## HELP WANTED (CONT'D)



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# Statistics

RESOURCES INDUSTRY TRENDS BY THE NUMBERS



## WANTED: MO' MONEY, MO' MANPOWER

The Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) recently surveyed its members on everything from staff pay rates to acreage maintained. Here are some interesting numbers from that survey:

Avg. ornamental flower beds	38,500 sq. ft.
Avg. mulch used	.506 cu. yds.
Avg. sidewalks, patios and terraces maintained	.75,240 sq. ft.
Avg. annuals planted	10,690
Avg. bedding plant area	.69,200 sq. ft.
Avg. supervisor pay rate	\$19.33 per hr.
Avg. foreman pay rate	\$13.39 per hr.
Avg. full-time employee pay rate	\$11.22 per hr.
Avg. seasonal employee pay rate	\$8.28 per hr.

SOURCE: PGMS

## WISCONSIN'S GREEN INDUSTRY ON THE UP AND UP

Producer Sector: Receipts by Service

Green service	Receipts (\$)	% of total
Landscape installation	382,550,000	47
Landscape/lawn/garden maintenance	125,790,000	15
Landscape architecture, design or planning	82,890,000	10
Tree and shrub service	78,660,000	10
Fertilizer and pesticide application	55,800,000	7
Irrigation installation/maintenance	43,420,000	5
Florist services	9,800,000	1
Interiorscape	4,820,000	1
Other	35,720,000	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>819,450,000</b>	<b>100</b>

SOURCE: WISCONSIN AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

## TRUCK SALE FORECAST

	2004 sales	2005 sales	2006 sales
Medium-duty (classes 5-7)	240,000	260,000	280,000
Commercial (classes 1-3)	2.85 million	2.9 million	2.95 million
Heavy-duty	240,000	300,000	320,000

SOURCE: ELI LUSTGARTEN, ANALYST AT J.B. HANAUER & CO. (PARSIIPPANY, NJ) AND KEN KREMAR, PRINCIPAL AT GLOBAL INSIGHT'S INDUSTRY FORECAST PRACTICES GROUP (EDDYSTONE, PA)

## IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

- ▶ 36% of all immigrants were born in North America (16% in Mexico) and 35% were born in Asia
- ▶ Legal immigration in 2003 (705,827) was lower than in 2002 (1,063,732)
- ▶ 63% of all immigrants intended to reside in six states: California, New York, Texas, Florida, New Jersey and Illinois
- ▶ Refugee arrivals increased in 2003 by 5% to 28,306 after declining by 61% from 2001 to 2002
- ▶ Total nonimmigrant admissions in 2003 (27.8 million) decreased by .2% from 2002 (27.9 million). Half were from four countries: the United Kingdom (16.3%), Mexico (15.5%), Japan (12.9%) and Germany (5.2%)
- ▶ The DHS naturalized 463,204 persons in fiscal year 2003; 42% were born in Asian countries, followed by 28% from North American countries
- ▶ California was the intended residence of 29% of persons naturalizing, followed by New York with 14%
- ▶ The number of deportable aliens located during 2003 declined 1.5% to 1.0 million
- ▶ The number of removals increased almost 24% to more than 186,000

SOURCE: USCIS — THE YEARBOOK OF IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

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