

Involve employees  
in tough decisions

COLOR CUES

The first  
Internet president

SOLUTIONS FOR A GROWING INDUSTRY

# Landscape MANAGEMENT

DECEMBER 2008 / [www.landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net)

A photograph of three men standing in a nursery or greenhouse. The man on the left is wearing a white shirt and khaki pants, leaning against a wooden post. The man in the middle is wearing a dark jacket and khaki pants, with his arms crossed. The man on the right is wearing a white shirt and blue jeans. They are all smiling. In the background, there are many potted plants and a gravel path.

*iViva* **Viva!**

In tough times, Florida's largest landscape company counts on its brand and its leader's dynamism to take it to the next level





# we got your tools of the trade right here.

**GET UP TO \$2,000 IN UPFIT ASSISTANCE  
ON ALL E-SERIES VANS AND UP TO  
\$1,000 ON F-SERIES CHASSIS CABS\*  
DURING THE FORD COMMERCIAL TRUCK  
SEASON YEAR-END SALE.**





**And take advantage of huge tax savings opportunities with the Economic Stimulus Act,\*\* which increases the depreciation provision for new truck purchases in 2008 from 30% up to 50%. For more information on tax savings and Commercial Truck Season, visit [commtruck.ford.com](http://commtruck.ford.com).**

**Hurry, savings end January 5.**



\*Available on upfits costing \$1,200 or more. Take delivery from dealer stock by 1/5/09. See dealer for complete details. \*\*For more information about the U.S. Economic Stimulus Act, Section 179 expense write-off or the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System (MACRS), contact your tax professional or visit the Internal Revenue Service Web site at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). Please note this information is provided by Ford Motor Company as a public service to its customers. It should not be construed as tax advice or as a promise of potential tax savings or reduced tax liability.

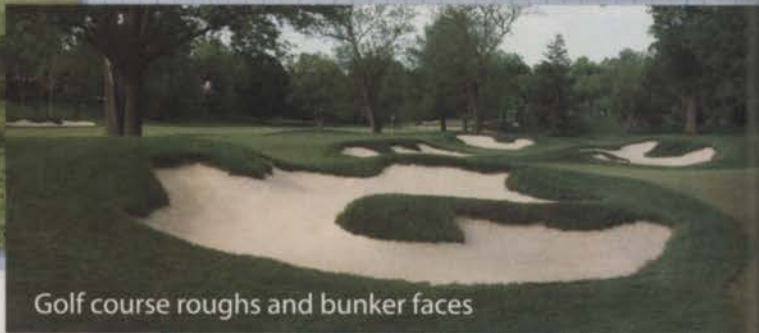


Savvy Landscape Managers and Designers who think green are sure to

make **ORIGIN: OREGON** Tall Fescue  
**PART** of  
the **ART**

Environmentally friendly, deep-rooted, drought, wear and shade tolerant tall fescue has long been a favorite of those who specify and manage turfgrass. Newer varieties have improved disease and insect tolerance, darker green color and finer leaves than before.

So, think green and make Oregon grown tall fescue part of your art ... today!



Always specify Origin: Oregon tall fescue seed for consistent quality produced by professional growers in the Grass Seed Capital of the World.

Oregon  
Tall Fescue  
Commission

[www.oregontallfescue.org](http://www.oregontallfescue.org)





# Contents



DECEMBER 2008 / ISSUE #12 / VOLUME 47



## Business

### 8 On the Record

We have to learn to be more responsive to this generation's "greener" perspective and be more top-of-mind to brand-conscious consumers.

BY RON HALL

### 10 Jacobs' Journal

Let's share our toughest lessons so we can keep each other from sledding into the street.

BY DANIEL G. JACOBS

### 12 In the Know

Extreme Home Makeover; Problem Solver; winter tree pruning; Legally Speaking

### 18 ¡Viva, Vila!

In tough times, Florida's largest landscape company counts on its brand and leader.

BY RON HALL

### 32 Lawn Care Pro

Jim Campanella, Co-owner, The Lawn Dawg

BY JAMES E. GUYETTE

### 34 Best Practices

Including employees in decision making helps prevent negative effects on morale.

BY BRUCE WILSON



### 36 Business Benchmarking

It's too late to close the door when your cost and revenue horses have galloped out of the barn.

BY KEVIN KEHOE

### 38 Working Smarter

Going to the next level means taking our people to the next level first.

BY JIM PALUCH

### 56 Whit's World

The Big Three are struggling because too many within the organizations fought embracing lean.

BY MARTY WHITFORD

## Design/Build

### 41 Award Winning Landscape Snapshot

The McCalla residence

### 43 Color Cues

Having a plan to partner with your grower is key to increasing your business.

### 44 Project Portfolio

Living a California lifestyle New York



## Technology

### 46 InfoTech

Technology in the Obama administration

BY TYLER WHITAKER

## Resources

48 Products 53 Classifieds 55 Ad & Editorial Indices

COVER PHOTO BY: MATTHEW PACE

# LM.net

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT CONTINUES ONLINE / December 2008

## » Online now



### WaterSense Partner of the Year

It seemed like everybody wanted a piece of Tim Malooly's (at left) time at the Irrigation Association show in Los Angeles, last month. Named the first-ever EPA WaterSense Partner of the Year, Malooly spent much of his time at the conference chatting up the value of the EPA WaterSense program to fellow contractors.

### » Overheard

**"There's no teleprompter to tell me what I'm supposed to say."**

— Weed Man's Phil Fogarty, who was overcome by emotion and at a rare loss for words when accepting the Professional Landcare Network's (PLANET's) Lifetime Leadership Award recently.

### » ONLINERESOURCES

#### Industry news

Read the latest news before the print issue comes out.

#### E-newsletters

Sign up to receive *LMdirect!* delivered to your inbox. Or link to our affiliated sites for news and e-newsletters on golf course management, landscape design/build, athletic turf and pest control.

#### Archives

Browse the archives for business articles and subject-specific technical articles. Don't miss the archives of special issues like the Business Planner, LM 100 and Outlook.

#### New! LMSearch

LMSearch, our simplified vertical search engine, helps you zero in on what you need. Visit: [landscapemanagement.net/search](http://landscapemanagement.net/search)

#### Contact us

Stay in touch via direct phone numbers and e-mail addresses for our editorial and advertising departments.

### » Readers respond

How has the economic downturn affected your 2009 budget?



Want to weigh in? Our survey question changes every month and we publish the results here. Visit [www.landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net) to voice your opinion.

### » Special issue

Visit [www.landscapemanagement.net/Podcasts](http://www.landscapemanagement.net/Podcasts) to check out our November *LMdirect!* podcast newsletter, which features three videos from this year's GIE+EXPO.





# MAKE MONEY!

With our 39 universal attachments we can transform your skid steer into a money making machine. OUR ATTACHMENTS CONVERT YOUR SKID STEER POWER UNIT INTO THE MOST PROFITABLE, VERSITILE, AND ECONOMICAL PIECE OF EQUIPMENT YOU OWN. Our legacy has been built upon our reputation and heritage of offering the finest attachments and providing the best customer service in the industry.

Foremost Attachment Authority  
SINCE 1948

**QUICK ATTACH™**

ATTACHMENTS, INC.

Skid Steer Attachments



**FREE CATALOG**  
Call Now!



**1-866-428-8224**

**IMMEDIATE SHIPPING**  
**FINANCING AVAILABLE!**

MADE IN U.S.A.



God Bless America

**SAVE**

**BUY FACTORY DIRECT**

*Order Today! Phones open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week...*

QUICK ATTACH, P.O. BOX 128 • ALEXANDRIA, MN 56308

F.O.B. FACTORY







Are you looking  
for a great divider or  
the ultimate restraint?

Its 1" depth makes  
Stone-Edg ideal for  
architectural stones:

Travertine  
Flagstone  
Bluestone  
Tumbled Marble  
Slate...

**STONE-EDG™**

**THE FIRST  
1"  
PAVER  
RESTRAINT**

1-800-EDGINGS  
www.lylo.com

**QUALITY EQUIPMENT.  
QUALITY RESULTS.**



**E-Z-TRENCH®**  
OUR NAME SAYS IT ALL

843.756.6444  
lm.eztrench.com

# Landscape MANAGEMENT

VISIT US ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB AT: [www.landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net)

## Editorial staff

Editor-in-Chief	MARTY WHITFORD / 216/706-3766 / <a href="mailto:mwhitford@questex.com">mwhitford@questex.com</a>
Editor-at-Large	RON HALL / 216/706-3739 / <a href="mailto:rhall@questex.com">rhall@questex.com</a>
Managing Editor	DANIEL G. JACOBS / 216/706-3754 / <a href="mailto:djacobs@questex.com">djacobs@questex.com</a>
Senior Science Editor	KARL DANNEBERGER, PH.D. / <a href="mailto:danneberger.1@osu.edu">danneberger.1@osu.edu</a>
Art Director	CARRIE PARKHILL / 216/706-3780 / <a href="mailto:cparkhill@questex.com">cparkhill@questex.com</a>

## Reader advisory panel

DEBBY COLE	Greater Texas Landscapes / Austin, TX
WAYNE VOLZ	Wayne's Lawn Service, Inc. / Louisville, KY
JOHN GACHINA	Gachina Landscape Management / Menlo Park, CA
BILL HOOPEES	Grass Roots Training / Delaware, OH
ROB SANTO	Garrick-Santo Landscape / Malden, MA
FRED HASKETT	US Lawns / St. Louis, MO
LARRY IORII	Down to Earth Landscaping / Wilmington, DE
TODD GRAUS	Green Turf Lawscapes / Worland, WY
GARY LASCALEA	GroGreen / Plano, TX
JACK ROBERTSON	Jack Robertson Lawn Care / Springfield, IL
DR. BARRY TROUTMAN	ValleyCrest Companies / Sanford, FL
BRIAN VINCHESI	Irrigation Consulting / Pepperell, MA

## Business staff

Group Publisher	KEVIN STOLTMAN / 216/706-3740 / <a href="mailto:kstoltman@questex.com">kstoltman@questex.com</a>
Admin. Coordinator	PETRA TURKO / 216/706-3768 / <a href="mailto:pturko@questex.com">pturko@questex.com</a>
Production Manager	AMBER TERCH / 218/279-8835 / <a href="mailto:aterch@questex.com">aterch@questex.com</a>
Production Director	RHONDA SANDE / 218/279-8821 / <a href="mailto:rsande@questex.com">rsande@questex.com</a>
Audience Development Manager	ANTOINETTE SANCHEZ-PERKINS / 216/706-3750 / <a href="mailto:asanchez-perkins@questex.com">asanchez-perkins@questex.com</a>
Assistant Audience Development Manager	CAROL HATCHER / 216/706-3785 / <a href="mailto:hatcher@questex.com">hatcher@questex.com</a>

## Advertising staff

Cleveland Headquarters	600 Superior Ave. E., Ste. 1100, Cleveland, OH 44114
Associate Publisher	PATRICK ROBERTS / 216/706-3736 Fax: 216/706-3712 <a href="mailto:proberts@questex.com">proberts@questex.com</a>
Regional Sales Manager	DAVE HUISMAN / 732/493-4951 Fax: 732/493-4951 <a href="mailto:dhuisman@questex.com">dhuisman@questex.com</a>
Account Manager	KENDRA KOVALYCSIK / 216/706-3763 Fax: 216/706-3712 <a href="mailto:kkovalycsik@questex.com">kkovalycsik@questex.com</a>
East Coast Sales Rep.	MIKE MCGRATH / 216/706-3781 Fax: 216/706-3712 <a href="mailto:mmcgrath@questex.com">mmcgrath@questex.com</a>
West Coast Sales Rep.	CATE OLSZEWSKI / 216/706-3746 Fax: 216/706-3712 <a href="mailto:colszewski@questex.com">colszewski@questex.com</a>
Account Executive, Classifieds	KELLI VELASQUEZ / 216/706-3767 Fax: 216/706-3712 <a href="mailto:kvelasquez@questex.com">kvelasquez@questex.com</a>

## Marketing/magazine services

REPRINTS	landscapemanagement@reprintbuyer.com / 800/290-5460 x100
ILENE SCHWARTZ	Circulation List Rental / 216/371-1667
CUSTOMER SERVICES	Subscriber/Customer Service landscapemanagement@halldata.com / 847/763-9594
PAUL SEMPLE	International Licensing 714/513-8614 Fax: 714/513-8845 <a href="mailto:psemple@questex.com">psemple@questex.com</a> For current single copy, back issues, or CD-Rom, call 847/763-9594

## QUESTEX MEDIA

KERRY C. GUMAS	President & Chief Executive Officer
TOM CARIDI	Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer
ROBERT S. INGRAHAM	Executive Vice President
ANTONY D'AVINO	Executive Vice President
JON LEIBOWITZ	Executive Vice President
CLAUDIA FLOWERS	Executive Vice President - Corporate Development
SETH NICHOLS	Vice President - Digital Media
DIANE EVANS	Vice President - Human Resources



Proud supporter of these green industry professional organizations:



**American Nursery & Landscape Association**  
1000 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20005-4914  
202/789-2900  
www.anla.org



**American Society of Irrigation Consultants**  
PO Box 426  
Rochester, MA 02770  
508/763-8140  
www.asic.org



**Independent Turf and Ornamental Distributors Association**  
526 Brittany Drive  
State College, PA 16803-1420  
Voice: 814/238-1573 / Fax: 814/238-7051  
www.itoda.org



**The Irrigation Association**  
6540 Arlington Blvd.  
Falls Church, VA 22042  
703/573-3551  
www.irrigation.org



**an Association of Floriculture Professionals**  
2130 Stella Court  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614/487-1117  
www.ofa.org



**The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute**  
341 South Patrick St.  
Old Town Alexandria, VA 22314  
703/549-7600  
opei.mow.org



**Professional Grounds Management Society**  
720 Light Street  
Baltimore, MD 21230  
410/752-3318  
www.pgms.org



**The Professional Landcare Network**  
950 Herndon Parkway, Suite 450  
Herndon, VA 20170  
703/736-9666  
www.landcarenetwork.org



**Project EverGreen**  
PO Box 156  
New Prague, MN 56071  
877/758-4835  
www.projectevergreen.com



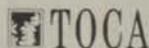
**Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment**  
1156 15th St. NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20005  
202/872-3860  
www.pestfacts.org



**Snow & Ice Management Association**  
7670 N. Port Washington Road, Suite 105  
Milwaukee, WI 53217  
414/375-1940  
www.sima.org



**Sports Turf Managers Association**  
805 New Hampshire, Ste. E  
Lawrence, KS 66044  
800/323-3875  
www.sportsturfmanager.com



**Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association**  
P.O. Box 156  
New Prague, MN 56071  
612/758-5811  
www.toca.org

## Liquid Handling Systems & Equipment



### Mix-n-Fill System

Chemical Pre-Mix Tank Systems

110 or 12 volt units

### MCTS Systems

Multi Chemical Transfer Systems

Manual or auto transfer



## CHEMICAL CONTAINERS, INC.

800-346-7867 • sales@chemicalcontainers.com  
P.O. Box 1307 • Lake Wales, Florida 33859

## Landscape Design Software

that makes an impact!

visual impact imaging  
**EARTHSCAPES**  
Landscape Design Software



- High resolution photo-imaging
- Design to-scale site plans in B&W or color
- Extensive Plant and Hardscapes Library
- Compatible with over 30 different file types
- Runs on Windows XP and Vista
- ...and many more outstanding features

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

Visit our website for a free demo or call 330.259.7661



## Hold on, Y'ers are comin'

BY RON HALL / Editor-at-Large

**O**ur industry, like our nation, is transitioning right now. The process is uncertain and unsettling. But once we come out of the other end of the worm hole of today's economic mess — and we will — the opportunities for all of us will be better than ever.

I'm confident of this because of what's following my own Baby Boom generation. I see millions of young people approaching adulthood and weaned on our uber-consumerist lifestyle.

Their desire for products and services will eclipse those of us boomers, whose preferences in terms of landscape and lawn care products and services are familiar to you. What's not so clear to you is what these approaching consumers will demand when we boomers fade away.

The generations following my generation are loosely defined as Gen X (born 1965-1980) and Gen Y, the 80 million strong adolescents and very young adults that now drive our pop culture, and are the object of the massive U.S. marketing machine. Meeting the needs of these newer consumers (especially the Y'ers) will offer opportunities and challenges that most of us have never experienced before.

While Gen Xers are not like us boomers, Y'ers are way, way off the charts compared to us.

Many of them have just a vague understanding of the Cold War, never mind the 1970s OPEC oil embargo, the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement or President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society or leisure suits.

Few of them have ever seen, never mind used a dial phone, and they can't envision civilization prior to cell phones, iPods, instant messaging, peer-to-peer file sharing and Facebook. Y'ers get their news online and they communicate digitally.

While we boomers got the environmental movement started and were there for the passage of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 and the Clean Water Act and improvements to Clear Air legislation, the Y'ers — growing up under constant reminders of global warming and environmental degradation — will expect and insist upon "greener" products and services.

These aren't the only trends we'll see as this huge younger generation passes into adulthood.

We'll see the need for more multi-family housing. The Y'ers, carrying ever-larger student loans into their careers, will not aspire to own McMansions, drive SUVs or live in communities or suburbs with long commutes. These young adults will pursue careers that allow them to enjoy their distinctive lifestyle choices. They're not likely to view laying pavers, trimming ornamentals or mowing their properties as something they want to do.

What does this mean to you? You will communicate to this audience in new ways and with new media, be more responsive to this generation's "greener" perspective and be more top-of-mind to these consumers who are showing themselves to be brand-conscious.

Contact Ron via e-mail at  
[rhall@questex.com](mailto:rhall@questex.com)

You will learn to communicate to this audience in new ways and with new media.





# Kawasaki

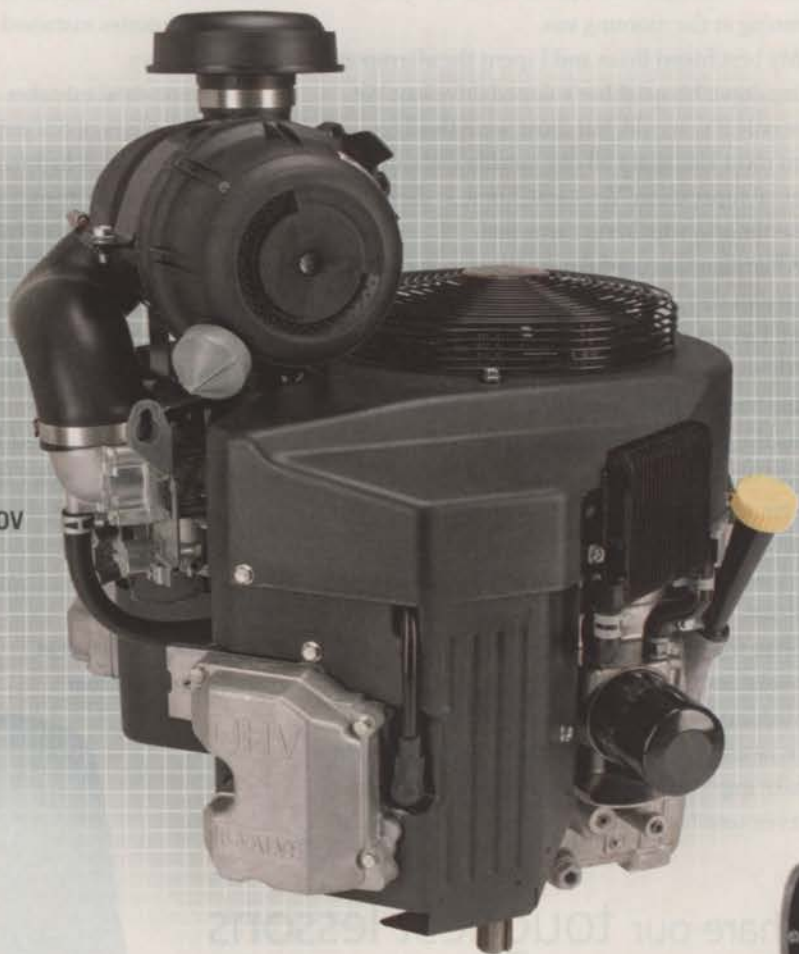
## Engines



## KAWASAKI. HIGH PERFORMANCE RUNS IN THE FAMILY.

**KAWASAKI ENGINES.** Known for innovative design and leading technology, Kawasaki engines have a heritage of high performance. From world-class motorcycles to commercial-grade engines for true landscape professionals, the Kawasaki name says it all. So now when you think about power, think Kawasaki. Find your authorized Kawasaki dealer at [www.kawpower.com](http://www.kawpower.com) or call 800-433-5640. **COMMERCIAL GRADE. KAWASAKI MADE.**

FX1000V





## My biggest mistake

BY DANIEL G. JACOBS / Managing Editor

**W**e had just been struck by one of those rare, intense Mid-western snowstorms. Ice coated everything 2-in. thick. It was an adult's nightmare and a child's dream. Everything was quiet. No school, no cars, just a world of crystal glistening in the morning sun.

My best friend Brian and I spent the afternoon sliding down his neighbor's sloped driveway. We were only 9 years old, but those were the days when most kids spent all day outside without parental supervision. You came home at dark or dinnertime — whichever came first.

After many successful runs, Brian took off head first on his sled, down the driveway, out into the street. I'm not sure Brian ever saw the car coming, and there was nothing I could do to stop it from hitting him. I remember seeing Brian's body spin across the road, coming to rest limp by the curb, a pool of blood forming near his head.

I ran to his mother's house. She and the driver frantically yet carefully put Brian in the man's car and drove him to a hospital. I think I walked home after that.

Brian was in a coma for three days. Thankfully, he awoke and somehow suffered no ill effects.

Sledding into the street was my biggest mistake, and it nearly cost a life. I can't fully know how that mistake impacted Brian's or his parents' lives. I'm not even sure I ever contemplated how that day af-

fecting the poor man that hit Brian until I wrote this column. The driver did nothing wrong, but I'm sure he felt horrible.

I've made many mistakes since then, and I'm sure there will be many more to come. Hopefully none will be so serious.

The mistakes we make in business *usually* aren't life threatening. But a recent report from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health found that between 2003 and 2006, a landscaper died from injuries sustained on the job, on average, every two days.

Even non-fatal mistakes can have a profound effect on the lives of our employees, families and customers. Mistakes happen. How well we minimize their negative impact and learn from them can determine our success or failure.

As we head to 2009, I'd like to hear about the biggest mistake you've made in your business, what you learned from it and what you did to resolve the issue and to ensure the same thing never happens again.

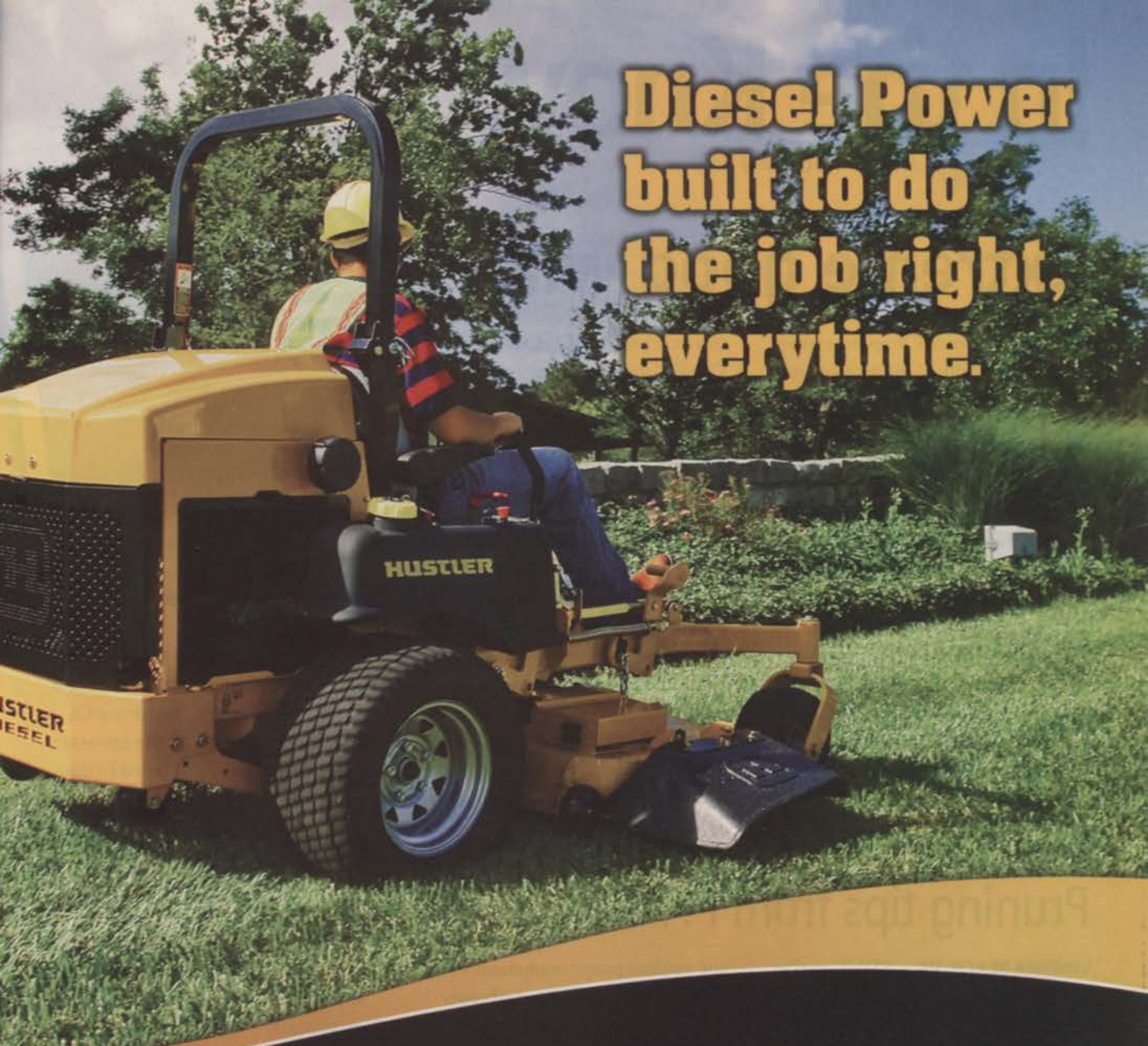
Let's share our toughest lessons so we can keep each other from sledding into the street.

.....  
**Contact Dan at**  
**216/706-3754 or e-mail at**  
**djacobs@questex.com**

Let's share our toughest lessons  
so we can keep each other from  
sledding into the street.





A worker wearing a yellow hard hat and a high-visibility vest is operating a yellow Hustler diesel riding mower on a green lawn. The mower has "HUSTLER" and "DIESEL" printed on it. The background shows trees and a clear sky.

**Diesel Power  
built to do  
the job right,  
everytime.**

**THE ORIGINAL  
TOUGH STUFF**

**Demo a mower at your local Hustler dealer and you'll see what we mean.**

[hustlerturf.com](http://hustlerturf.com)

**HUSTLER** 



# In the Know

BUSINESS

NEWS YOU CAN USE

## Extreme good will

**T**he Bruce Company teamed up with Veridian Homes to donate the landscape design, materials, and installation of the home's landscaping, and was recently featured on the program "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition."

The landscape was designed to complement the country feel of the home's design and to take advantage of the scenic views. Many old-fashioned country farm flowers were used in the design: such as peonies, daylilies, hollyhocks, hydrangeas, roses and bridalwreath spirea.

Before the demolition began, the existing plants around the home salvaged, taken off site, cleaned up and replanted

in a new bed — the "Mom's Garden" four days later. A Crabapple tree planted four years before, in memory of the children's father, was also incorporated into the landscape plan.

With the help of 64 Bruce Co. employees, who worked in shifts around the clock, along side gardeners from Richland County, and various friends, the gorgeous landscape was completed ahead of schedule. Because it was vital that the family felt this was their home, The Bruce Co. spent extra time on the details, like the placement of the flower hangers, the bird feeders, the

bird houses, the "mom's garden," and the path that leads to the horse pasture.

With best wishes to the family for many years of enjoyment in their new home and landscape, The Bruce Co. extends its gratitude for the generosity of the many who contributed to this project.



## Pruning tips from P. Allen Smith and STIHL

**VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.** — STIHL, maker of chain saws and a variety of other handheld equipment, and garden expert P. Allen Smith bring you the best tips and tricks for pruning trees in winter, while they are dormant. It's easier deciding what branches need to go with

the leaves out of the way. It's also good for the plants, because when they emerge in spring, they have extra root and energy reserves to support the new growth on the remaining branches.

Always read, understand and follow directions in the instruction manual for

any outdoor power equipment you use.

In general, professional arborists should always be called in to handle big tree jobs and any aboveground work. For branches that you can safely remove yourself, ensure you use the right tool for the job. The following guidelines can help you in your pruning jobs:

- ▶ Pruning should be limited to removal of no more than a third of the total bud and leaf-bud-bearing branches.
- ▶ Cut to the tree's natural shape and let it grow up. Avoid "scalping" the tree so its winter form looks unnatural.
- ▶ Remove dead branches, but don't confuse dead with dormant. If the branch was leafless in summer, it's time to remove it.
- ▶ Prune out diseased limbs, cutting well below the diseased areas. Avoid pruning diseased limbs when the plants are wet as water can spread the disease. Before

cutting another plant, rinse your tools with a solution of one part bleach to 10 parts water.

- ▶ Trim overhead branches that are in your way where you walk or mow.
- ▶ Prune out crossing, inward growing, parallel and competing branches. Where two branches cross, prune back the smaller one.
- ▶ Cut the branch next to the branch collar—the area of bark where branch and trunk meet. Cutting just above this area rather than flat against the tree ensures quicker healing. This area of the tree contains special anti-microbial chemicals and phenols, which help inhibit decay. If the cut is made here it's not necessary to use pruning paint.
- ▶ Avoid leaving stubs as you prune a tree, as they invite insects and disease to move in and attack healthy tissue.





## **DRIVE** XLR8 HERBICIDE

You've got enough things to worry about. But with **Drive® XLR8 herbicide**, rain isn't one of them. Our new liquid formulation is rainfast in just 30 minutes. And a single application quickly controls a broad spectrum of broadleaf and grassy weeds — from crabgrass and foxtail to clover and dandelion — even at low use rates per 1,000 square feet. Let it rain. You've got **Drive XLR8**.

[betterturf.com](http://betterturf.com) | 800-545-9525



# **BASF**

The Chemical Company



# In the Know

## LEGALLY Speaking

BY KENNETH D. MORRIS, ESQ., L.L.C.



**Q** My advertising agency recently designed and posted an aggressively worded billboard that angered my competitor. If I get sued, who pays—my advertising agency or me?

**A** That depends. You may have a claim against your agency and who ends up paying will likely depend on a judge or jury determination as to fault. If your state permits comparative negligence claims, you may both pay, depending on a jury's finding as to who is most culpable. Any advertising agency worth its salt, however, will have run a draft of the advertisement by you for approval before displaying it. If you actually approved the billboard before it was displayed, the agency will at least have some defense that you knew of and approved the wording before it was printed. If you have a written agreement with the agency, your attorney should review it before filing the claim. There may be some provision in the agency agreement (such as indemnification language, for example), which is relevant to the claim you will be making against the agency.

**Q** Is a verbal agreement worth anything? Am I always required to put service agreements in writing?

**A** Contracts for services, which are made orally are just as binding as those made in writing. Oral contracts, of course, present a special challenge since there is no memorialization signed by the parties specifying the terms of the engagement, time period covered, price, etc. You are better served (and have a better opportunity to protect yourself) if the contract is reduced to writing. Even with an oral contract, you should at least have made some notes as to the time of performance, length of service, prices, pest or weed to be controlled, etc.

Kenneth D. Morris, a Philadelphia-based attorney with more than 30 years corporate and law firm experience, offers information on industry legal issues in each issue of *LM*. Contact him via [www.kenmorrislaw.com](http://www.kenmorrislaw.com).

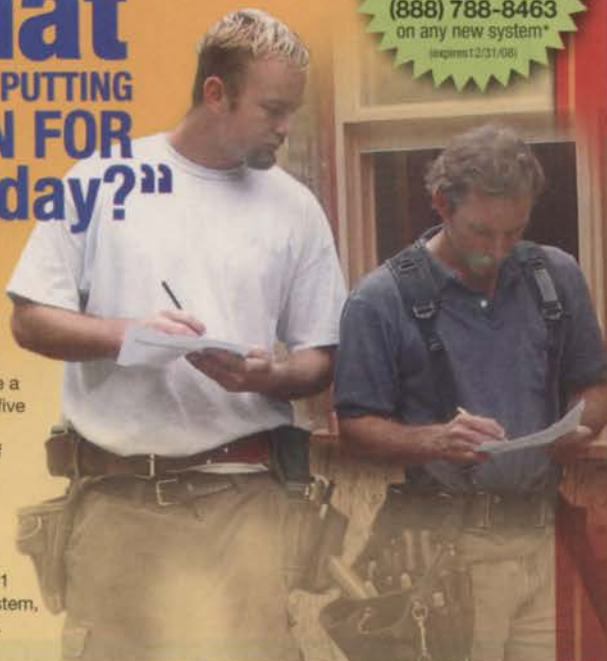
**Note:** The above should not be interpreted as offering legal advice in any jurisdiction where such practice is not authorized. Engage competent counsel familiar with your jurisdiction when legal issues arise.

# “What ARE YOU PUTTING DOWN FOR Tuesday?”

Does he *really* remember how long lunch was 3 days ago?

Just 10 minutes of lost work time a day adds up to five full days a year. That's a week of vacation on your dime!

Get a reality check with construction's #1 timekeeping system, **The JobClock®**.



Limited Time  
**PHONE OFFER!**  
(888) 788-8463  
on any new system\*  
(exp. 12/31/08)

**EMPLOYEE TIMESHEET**

NAME: Bill Kemp DATE: 8-10

DATE	START	STOP	OFFICE	JOB CODE	HOURLY
MON	7:00	12:30			5.5
TUE					0
WED					8.5
THU					8.5
FRI					8.5
TOTAL HOURS					41.5

Employee Signature: Bill Kemp

**Employee Time Card**  
Displays the total time worked by each employee

**Bill Kemp**  
Time card for: Monday, December 8, 2008 - Friday, December 12, 2008

JobSite Name	Cost Code	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Total
Brentwood Job	Ingration	7:30	7:30	7:53	--	--	23:06
Creshlew Job	Paving Bot	--	--	7:58	7:46	7:49	15:47
		7:30	7:30	7:53	7:50	7:49	30:55

Regular Hours: 30:53  
OverTime Hours: 0  
Double Time Hours: 0

**REALITY?**

\*Minimum order size applies. Phone offer cannot be combined with any other offer.

**REALITY CHECK.**



[www.exaktime.com/jobclock](http://www.exaktime.com/jobclock)  
Call today: (888) 788-8463





**IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE  
ON THE JOB. AND AT THE PUMP.**



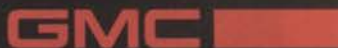
[GMC.COM/SIERRA](http://GMC.COM/SIERRA)

**INTRODUCING THE POWERFULLY EFFICIENT GMC® SIERRA® HYBRID.**

Power and efficiency used to be an impossible pairing. Until now. It all comes together with the GMC Sierra Hybrid. Its 2-mode hybrid engine offers up to a 50% improvement in city fuel economy when compared to the 2009 5.3L non-hybrid Sierra\* while delivering the power and capability you've come to expect. Powered by a Vortec™ 6.0L V8 engine, it delivers 332 horsepower and 367 lb-ft of torque. That's smart and tough, all in one truck. The new GMC Sierra Hybrid—performance and efficiency that drives your workplace. Limited availability begins late 2008.



THE SIERRA FROM GMC. WE ARE PROFESSIONAL GRADE.



\*EPA-estimated MPG 14 city/20 highway for the 2009 Sierra 2WD (non-hybrid) with 5.3L V8 and EPA-estimated MPG 21 city/22 highway for the 2009 Sierra Hybrid 2WD.



BEFORE



**Problem** This roadway median strip was never completed after road reconstruction. The local businesses located nearby wanted a finished appearance but did not want to pay for an irrigation system or have any monthly maintenance costs. What would you recommend?

**Solution**

Basically the clients wanted a neat, no maintenance solution.

There were a couple of ways to solve this challenge posed by the client. Mulch or rocks might have worked and looked OK, but in this case, we added gravel to raise the level to grade and to provide adequate drainage. Next, we installed artificial turf. It is amazing how the quality of artificial turf has improved in the last five years. The thickness, color and overall appearance give the area a very natural appearance. This is not a solution that will work in all cases. Nor was this a cheap solution, but in this case, the client was thrilled with the results, especially from a maintenance cost perspective.

AFTER



**Rhino Linings**<sup>®</sup>

**Protect Your Investment**

NATIONWIDE  
LIMITED  
LIFETIME  
WARRANTY

**Make It Last!**

Your trucks and equipment take a beating every day on the job. Make them last with Rhino Linings' superior protection. Whether you are investing in a new fleet of work trucks or looking to add life to your existing trucks and equipment, Rhino is a proven solution. Rhino Linings advanced protection is impervious to most chemicals, shrugs off abrasion and impact, and protects against rust and corrosion. Count on Rhino to **PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT.**

For more information, visit [rhinolinings.com](http://rhinolinings.com) or call 1-800-373-2156.

\*Warranty subject to restrictions and limitations. All dealerships independently owned and operated. ©2008 Rhino Linings Corporation. All rights reserved. LM1208 5254

Protecting Homes



A Division of Rhino Linings Corporation

For more information  
call 1-800-957-8509

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

Every day you see horticultural problems. Sometimes the solution is obvious, but others are much more difficult to solve. Brickman Group Senior Horticulture Specialist H. Bruce Hellerick tackles these issues each month in Problem Solver. He can be reached at [Hellerick@BrickmanGroup.com](mailto:Hellerick@BrickmanGroup.com)





## **Know the Sign.**

You can't afford anything but the best results.

That's why more professionals are turning to the quality and value that only Quali-Pro® can deliver.

That's a good sign.

Quali-Pro puts you in control of both pests and costs with proven products featuring the newest formulation technologies.

That's Quali-Pro.

# **QUALI-PRO**

Professional Turf & Ornamental Products

Learn more at [quali-pro.com](http://quali-pro.com).



# ¡Viva Vila!





# In tough times, Florida's largest landscape company counts on its brand and its leader's dynamism to take it to the next level

BY RON HALL / EDITOR-AT-LARGE

**J**uan Carlos Vila's considerable charm serves him well — but maybe not so much as his daily habit of rising at 5 a.m. or so every day and launching into the day's business.

"Our customers want to see the Vila behind Vila & Son," says Vila, 49, smiling broadly, the narrow gap between his upper two front teeth giving his face a boyish cast. "That means a lot in this very, very competitive market."

A self-described "go, go person," Vila is Vila & Son Landscaping Corp.'s co-founder and CEO. He's the out front presence in the largest landscape company in Florida — meeting clients, checking in with his managers or rallying employees, who he refers to as his "Vila family."

"I love what I do. I am very passionate about what I do," says Vila, the emotion rising in his voice and his Cuban accent growing stronger as he seeks to make his point. "I go to my yards, every yard. If I am not in Orlando, I am in Fort Myers. If I am not in Fort Myers, I'm in Miami. My employees see me and they know that I care. They see me working hard and they know I enjoy working hard."

Many of Vila's days start by climbing into a Robinson R44 helicopter on the expansive lawn at his home in a rural region in southwest Miami and whisking away, perhaps for a breakfast or lunch meeting with a branch manager or to celebrate a success or a holiday event with employees. Or, he may be flying to meet with a prospect or to attend a client board meeting.

Vila prefers to do business face to face, and he plans to continue to leverage that, convinced that it offers Vila & Son a competitive edge against the several national landscape companies that also have a presence in his adopted state. Like a football coach, he considers the huge Florida

landscape market his company's home turf, and the clients he's nurtured his partners.

"We believe in relationships, long-term relationships," says Vila. "That's something we never forget."

What he would dearly like to forget, however, is today's economy.

With the state's economy in the dumper because of stalled construction activity and a collapsed housing market, especially in south Florida, Vila and his management team are budgeting "conservatively" for 2009.

"The economy is tough, as tough as I've ever seen it," admits Vila. "We have to be more efficient with our operations and our costs, and we'll work hard and be very aggressive with sales."

## Up to the challenge

Vila views the state's economic woes with the same determination and deliberation as other challenges the company has had to overcome since he and his father, Baldillo, started their landscape company in 1984.

Challenges? None were bigger than the one they faced Aug. 24, 1992. That's the day Hurricane Andrew, the second most-powerful hurricane to make landfall in the United States during the 20th century, almost destroyed their then 8-year-old company — as it did almost everything in and around the nearby community of Homestead. Winds exceeding 150 mph howled across flat south Florida for four hours, causing 65 deaths, flattening 117,000 homes and doing all it could to blow Vila & Son Landscaping away.

"We lost the house. We lost the office. We lost our (plant nursery) inventory. We lost every record we had," recalls Vila. "We didn't have any

*continued on page 20*



*continued from page 19*

records of who owed us or whom we had to pay. We didn't even have contact with our employees. They were scattered all around here. It was tough, very tough."

As soon as they were able, employees started returning and helping one another and the company get back to normal. It was a long, exhausting process. Vila understandably disheartened at the time, still remembers what he and his father said to each other then: "It's been 12 years since we came from Cuba with almost nothing. We can start over. We have experience now."

Vila says he'll never forget this lesson, adding sheepishly that providing security and backup for company records is another.

Hurricanes aside (several others have raked Florida since), the state grew rapidly, peaking 2002-2006 when it averaged



419,000 new residents annually. The migration provided great opportunities for Vila & Son Landscaping. To keep pace with the growth, cities and government agencies hustled to build infrastructure, and relied upon Vila & Son for related landscape services. Meanwhile the company increased its presence on commercial properties, multi-family developments and residential properties. In the 1990s, Vila & Son partnered with Disney World and

*continued on page 22*

## Vila & Son Landscaping at a glance

**Owner:** Juan Carlos Vila

**Headquarters:** Miami

**Date Founded:** Feb. 1984 by Baldillo Vila and Juan C. Vila

**Chief Officers:** Juan C. Vila, CEO; Ricardo Leal, President

**Services Offered:** Commercial landscape, irrigation, maintenance

**Locations:** Branches — Miami, Orlando, West Palm Beach, Fort Myers; Satellite Offices — Broward, Port St. Lucie, Jacksonville

**Number of Employees:** 760

**2008 Revenue:** \$65 million

# EXPERIENCE



# THE PRO-TECH DIFFERENCE

QUALITY. INNOVATION. EFFICIENCY.

Call or visit Pro-Tech online to locate a dealer nearest you.

**888-787-4766** or [casestudies.snopusher.com](http://casestudies.snopusher.com)

© 2008, Pro-Tech, Inc. All rights reserved.





WASTED NITROGEN.



WORKING NITROGEN.



With fertilizer prices constantly rising you can't afford to use urea fertilizer that wastes nitrogen. Using enhanced efficiency UFLEXX™ Stabilized Nitrogen keeps more nitrogen working in the soil longer, which means better-looking lawns and happier customers. Keeping nitrogen in the soil where it belongs allows rates to be reduced by as much as 20%. That helps the environment and your business.

Build your program on a better nitrogen source for a better season. Ask your distributor for UFLEXX.

**UFLEXX**  
STABILIZED NITROGEN FERTILIZER



“My vision has always been to give opportunity to the people in my company and to move forward.”

— JUAN CARLOS VILA, CO-FOUNDER & CEO

continued from page 20

Universal Studies for several large projects.

While the Vila & Son name is still appropriate, there are now three gen-

erations represented in the company as Juan Carlos' son, Ivan, is learning the business. Baldillo, 76, long ago turned over the landscape company's fortunes



to his son and longtime manager/current president Ricardo “Rick” Leal. Baldillo remains healthy and works in the family's nursery business (when he wants to).

#### A shared passion

Identical in their passion to make Vila & Son the most successful landscape company in the United States, Juan Carlos Vila and Leal offer strikingly different personalities and bring different strengths to the company. While Vila spends most of his time and energy being the leader and motivator and meeting with managers, employees and, of course, customers and prospects, the youthful-looking Leal (Juan Carlos chuckles that some people have mistakenly assumed that Leal is his son, although the two men are closer in age than you might guess) manages the firm's larger operational issues from Miami.

The two men first became acquainted in 1987. It was a fateful meeting. Leal remembers approaching the younger Vila as he was operating a soil loader on a job site and handing him his resume. The two have worked together ever since. By pro-

For more about Vila & Sons' see:

**FOCUSING ON MAINTENANCE,**  
pg. 24

**FROM MARIEL BOATLIFT TO INDUSTRY LEADER,**  
pg. 26

## LET'S MEET ON YOUR TURF!



### ARE YOU “TURF” ENOUGH? NOT IF YOU DON'T KNOW TURFEX.

Introducing TurfEx — The only company offering a complete line of commercial-quality equipment to meet your most demanding turf care needs. Spreaders, sprayers, sweepers and accessories — all your tough turf tools from one source.

Let's take this outside.  
Contact TurfEx today!

1.866.5TURFEX • 586.756.6555



**TURFEX**  
THE COMMERCIAL TURF CHOICE

continued on page 30



# The next big thing in weed control...



...is also the smallest.

MORE CONCENTRATED • EASY TO HANDLE • CONSISTENT PERFORMANCE



Visit  
[WWW.ROUNDUPPROMAX.COM/SMARTCAR](http://WWW.ROUNDUPPROMAX.COM/SMARTCAR)  
for a chance to  
win a 2008 Smart Car.




Register to win by April 30, 2009. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Go to [WWW.ROUNDUPPROMAX.COM](http://WWW.ROUNDUPPROMAX.COM) to enter and view Official Rules. ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW PESTICIDE LABEL DIRECTIONS. Roundup PROMAX® is a registered trademark of Monsanto Technology LLC.  
©2008 Monsanto Company. 34364-jct-1M-12/08



## Focusing on maintenance

LIKE MANY COMPANIES, VILA & SON gets involved in maintenance because the installation company's clients asked them to. It's now one of the organization's

fastest-growing segments. And as other market segments remain flat, it's the driver that will push Vila past \$100 million by 2011.



**Training**  
Technical Expertise  
**Guidance**  
**Insights**  
**Advice**

Take the first step toward becoming a Professional Lighting Specialist.

Work has slowed down. You're looking to generate revenue between irrigation and landscaping jobs. Add outdoor lighting to your list of services. You already have many of the skills, and we'll provide everything else you'll need to be profitably successful.



**VISTA  
PROFESSIONAL  
OUTDOOR  
LIGHTING**

Make it your business to contact us today.

Call 800-766-VISTA or visit [www.vistapro.com](http://www.vistapro.com).

Customers might have initiated the move to maintenance, but it a peer group to which Vila belongs that encouraged the company's leaders to get serious about it, says Joe Janssen, division manager, maintenance services at Vila. Those fellow business owners challenged the company to do something to tap into maintenance's recurring revenue stream, Janssen says.

In 2005, Vila's maintenance division revenue hovered around \$6 million. This year, the company is on track for about \$15 million in revenue.

"We are projecting growth in the maintenance division year-end 2011 being \$50 million in revenue. That's a goal we have, and we're very serious about it," Janssen adds.

While the company might look for strategic acquisitions, the growth will come primarily from adding services to existing clients, building new maintenance business in the company's Florida offices and opening new locations.

"We've got multiple business developers on the streets today," Janssen says. "When I started, we didn't have any business developers on the street. Today, we've got six. Those business developers are bidding a great deal of work. With each bid, we touch people that didn't know that we were in that business.

"We're going to quadruple the number of employees in maintenance," he adds, noting that the company currently has about 170 maintenance employees. "We're talking about a significant amount of growth."

— Daniel G. Jacobs, Managing Editor

# SUPER B



*Take a Test Drive Today*



**INDEPENDENT  
INNOVATORS**

High Production Mowing

# WALKER MOWERS

5925 E. Harmony Road • Fort Collins, CO 80528 • 970.221.5614 • [www.walkermowers.com](http://www.walkermowers.com)



## From Mariel Boatlift to industry leader

THE RISE OF VILA & SON LANDSCAPING Corp. is an improbable success story.

The date is Sept. 4, 1980. The location is Mariel, a port city on Mariel Bay, about

25 miles west of Havana. Hundreds of Cuban citizens are gathered there.

Five months earlier, the government of Fidel Castro announced



On Sept. 4, 1980, 264 people crowded into a shrimp boat at Mariel Bay, Cuba and set out to reach Key West, Florida.

that anybody who wanted to leave Cuba could do so. The decision reflected a temporary thaw in U.S.-Cuba relations, but was driven more by a severe downturn in the island economy that sparked a series of protests.

It's 5 a.m. and Juan Carlos Vila, then six days shy of his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, boards a shrimp boat with his father, mother and sister. They're among the 264 people crowded into the vessel. Their destination is Florida, where they plan to reunite with family members who

fled Cuba in the late 1960s.

Key West, the southernmost point on the United States mainland, is a mere

**WEB EXTRA**  
Read about what freedom means to Juan Carlos Vila at [www.landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net).

95 miles across the Straits of Florida. But 95 miles on a badly overcrowded shrimp boat is unpleasant enough without Mother Nature making it tougher.

"There was a storm and lightning and the waves were 10 to 15 ft.," recalls Vila in his distinctive Cuban accent. "About three hours after we left Cuba, a couple of big (U.S.) Coast Guard boats got close to us. I said, 'Oh my God.' Only then did we feel we were safe."

The Coast Guard escorted the crowded shrimp boat to Key West, where it docked at about 4 p.m. After

*continued on page 28*

# WE DON'T BUILD A CHEAP MACHINE...



## WE JUST PRICE ONE THAT WAY.

- NO cheap plastic tanks that don't last.
- NO under-powered jet agitation suitable only for mixing lightweight slurries.

▶ The FINN T-30 HydroSeeder.® Robust corrosion resistant steel tank. Reversible, variable speed mechanical paddle agitation capable of mixing the thickest slurries — fast. Electric hose reel with 100 ft. of hose — **standard**. Powered by a fuel efficient 15HP Kohler Command PRO Engine. The T-30 comes fully equipped and ready to make you money from day one! Don't let the price fool you, there's nothing cheap about it.

**Make the T-30 your First HydroSeeder. From FINN... the First Company in HydroSeeders.**

Visit us at **IECA** booth #530.

**HYDROSEEDERS**

# FINN

[www.firncorp.com](http://www.firncorp.com)  
800.543.7166



**DRIVE**  
XLR8

**Basagran** T70

**segment**  
HERBICIDE

You've got enough to worry about. Don't let complaint calls due to poor product performance be one of them. At BASF, our full line of herbicides includes some of the newest, most effective and most trusted chemistries available — all with peace of mind and proven performance built right in. Call us.

**betterturf.com | 800-545-9525**

**BASF**

The Chemical Company



*continued from page 26*

being processed through immigration, Vila, his family and the other Cubans were bused to a center in Miami later that same day.

More than 127,000 Cubans eventually

crossed the Straits of Florida during the Mariel Boatlift, which lasted almost six months. Castro stopped the emigration in October 1980.

Arriving in Miami, many Cubans were placed in refugee camps. Others,

like the Vila family, reunited with family members from whom they had been separated for years.

Baldillo Vila, the patriarch of the family, and his son Juan Carlos took night jobs in facility maintenance (mostly cleaning work) at the Orange Bowl, then the home of the NFL Miami Dolphins.

After several months in their newly adopted country, the duo began working at local Green Industry companies — Baldillo in a nursery and Juan Carlos as an equipment operator moving soil. That year the family secured a small house with a big yard in the Little Havana section of Miami, and Baldillo began planting and propagating plants.

Within a year, father and son had scraped together \$14,000, aided by mowing and weekend landscaping jobs, to buy into a local nursery.

"We decided then that we didn't want to work for anybody else," recalls the younger Vila. "We started knocking on doors and getting jobs."

During the day, he worked, and in the evenings he attended Miami Dade College to learn English.

In 1985, a year after partnering with his father to start Vila & Son — and with the nursery and landscaping businesses showing promise — Vila recalls how excited he was when he bought a Motorola mobile radio for the business.

"I said, 'One day I'm going to have two or three hundred of these units all around the state.'"

What a bold promise from a young man who just four years previously had entered the country with few job prospects and not even able to speak English.

— RH

# The next best thing to real.

## DESIGN IT. SELL IT.

Landscape design is all about vision, and knowing how to share that vision with potential customers. With PRO Landscape design software, you can translate your creative ideas into photorealistic images and proposals in minutes, giving your vision the polish and impact you need to sell. With more than 15 years on the market, PRO Landscape is the most popular, professional landscape design software available today — and the next best thing to real.

- Realistic photo imaging
- Easy-to-use CAD
- Customer proposals
- 3D photo rendering
- 3D CAD rendering
- Night & holiday lighting

**PRO Landscape**  
SELL BETTER | PLAN BETTER | BID BETTER

60-Day Money-Back Guarantee

800-231-8574 or [prolandscape@drafix.com](mailto:prolandscape@drafix.com) [www.prolandscape.com](http://www.prolandscape.com)



*An Old Way to Search...*



*A New Way to Search!*



Zero in on the industry's suppliers and products you need and fast!

**LMsearch**

[www.LandscapeManagement.net/Search](http://www.LandscapeManagement.net/Search)

**Landscape**  
MANAGEMENT



continued from page 22

moting Leal as president of the company this past spring, Vila acknowledged Leal's importance to the company's future. "We knew even then that we could not do all we wanted to do by ourselves," says Vila.

"We knew we had to hire good talent to grow the company."

Finding talent is the company's biggest challenge, says Vila. The company maintains an aggressive program to bring new managers "into the Vila family."

"My vision has always been to give opportunity to the people in my company and to move forward," says Vila.

In addition to its management team, Vila points to his company's involvement in the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), its ongoing networking and sharing of best practices with other quality companies across the nation, and the guidance it has received from several well-known industry consultants as keys to its continued growth and profitability.

"We constantly reinforce the message that we're a proven entity."

— RICK LEAL, PRESIDENT

Leal says that the company will roll into 2009 with a nice book of work, particularly through the first half of the season. He's confident that even if the economy flatlines, the company can at least match 2008's performance.

"We have relationships at all levels and communication at all levels. We constantly reinforce the message that we're a proven entity," Leal says. "We tell them (clients and prospects) that now is not the time to take risks and, perhaps, not get projects done right or on time."

Vila agrees.

"In this economy, we want to emphasize our brand," he adds. "We want our customers to know that we've been here for them the past 24 years, and we will be here for them the next 24 years. We were here for them in the good times, and we will be here and partnering with them and working with them on their budgets in the bad times." LM

2009 TRADE SHOW

**Gulf States**  
HORTICULTURAL EXPO, INC.  
*The premier winter trade show of the South.*



Educational Programs

January 29, 2009

Trade Show

January 30-31, 2009

For more information call  
334-502-7777  
or visit our website  
at [www.gshe.org](http://www.gshe.org)





**TRUCK**

**TIPS<sup>SM</sup>**

*From* **PROGRESSIVE**

**#7**

**Service with a smile goes a long way. Until you back over someone's septic tank.**

Whether you're traveling to a job site or picking up supplies, you need an insurance company who understands your business. At Progressive Commercial Auto Insurance, we offer customized policies that save you money, because you only pay for what you need. And our policies are all offered at competitive rates with low down payment options. Now that's Progressive.

**PROGRESSIVE<sup>®</sup>**  
COMMERCIAL

1-888-274-2190 / [PROGRESSIVECOMMERCIAL.COM](http://PROGRESSIVECOMMERCIAL.COM) / LOCAL INDEPENDENT AGENT

United Financial Casualty Company and its affiliates, Mayfield Village, Ohio. Not available in all states. 08A00201.T (03/08)



# Lawn Care Pro

BUSINESS

LM'S OPERATOR OF THE MONTH

## Jim Campanella »

Co-owner with Tom Kelly of The Lawn Dawg, Nashua, NH

BY JAMES E. GUYETTE

**B**ased in the Granite State of New Hampshire with five locations throughout New England, Jim Campanella has a rock-solid belief in the benefits of maintaining a strong level of industry and civic involvement.

His term as president of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) was "one of the most rewarding experiences of my life," Campanella recalls. "I learned just how great this industry is and how knowledgeable, professional and passionate the members are about this industry."

Stepping up to help with community projects is another priority: Campanella has served as president of the local Rotary club in addition to being a director for the YMCA and being an active volunteer in the Toys for Tots program. A significant holiday lighting donation to help brighten wintertime festivities in Nashua "brought a tremendous amount of goodwill and additional brand recognition" — along with a deep sense of personal satisfaction, he says.

**You are a PLANET Trailblazer. How has helping others in the industry assisted your business or you personally?** It's all about networking and relationship building. I've learned as much as I've taught. As a beneficiary of learning from some of the leaders of this industry, I feel obligated to help the next generation of future leaders as they create and develop their businesses.

### How did you come up with the name

**Lawn Dawg?** The name and logo resulted from a desire to differentiate ourselves. The logo is displayed on our trucks, Web site and all marketing literature.

### What are some of the management challenges presented by having multiple enterprises?

The initial challenge was trying to let go of the day-to-day operations and focusing on the long-term planning and strategies. Once I put Vice President of Operations Tom Bucci in charge of the daily needs of the branches, things have run much better.

The ongoing challenge is the fact that your employees will just never care as much as the owner. We've recently launched a new employee morale initiative that will focus on encouraging and rewarding our lawn specialists for delivering a high level of customer service.

### You offer an EARTHcare organic program.

**How effective has this been in attracting new customers?** The EARTHcare program is more than just an organic alternative. It is the only program we offer.

The fertilizer is a custom blend of synthetic and organic materials, coupled with responsible pesticide use.

EARTHcare is more a philosophy than just a program. It is also an educational avenue to make our residential



### AT A GLANCE

- Founded: 1997
- Number of branches: 5
- Employees: 75 during peak season
- Industry involvement: President of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) 2004; President of the Massachusetts Association of Lawn Care Professionals (MALCP) 2003
- Business outlook: Low to no growth for 2009, followed by 5% revenue growth per year 2010 through 2014.
- Personal highlights/hobbies: Avid golfer, traveler and wine enthusiast
- Family: Married with two children
- Web site: [www.lawndawg.com](http://www.lawndawg.com)

and commercial customers aware that healthy lawns are extremely beneficial to the environment, and that responsible pesticide use is an important tool in achieving healthy lawns.

**What do you view as the biggest challenges going forward for the Green Industry?** The biggest challenge to the Green Industry is the increasing legislation brought on by the aggressive green movement of activist groups.

We only have to look across the border to our friends in Canada to see how badly and how quickly our businesses can be devastated. Consider this a call to action to all LCOs (lawn care operators) to get involved and be proactive before we suffer the same fate.

— The author is a freelance writer in Newbury, OH. Contact him at [jimguyette2004@yahoo.com](mailto:jimguyette2004@yahoo.com).

If you know of a top-notch lawn care professional who gives of him or herself to the community and the industry and is worthy of recognition, e-mail us at [djacobs@questex.com](mailto:djacobs@questex.com), and tell us why.



**Trinity**  
FUNGICIDE

You've got enough to worry about, so use **Trinity® fungicide** to control anthracnose, brown patch, take-all patch, summer patch and dollar spot, even during summer stress periods. Use it to suppress algae, too, which can lead to higher turf quality. Like the entire family of BASF fungicides, **Trinity** works. So don't worry. Everything will be a-ok.

**betterturf.com | 800-545-9525**

**BASF**

The Chemical Company



Including employees in decision-making often makes the cuts more understandable and avoids negative effects on morale.



## Avoiding economic woes

BY BRUCE WILSON

**M**any companies are feeling the effects of a recessionary economy and are looking at ways to cut costs. There are many challenges associated with cost-cutting that must be considered.

Labor and salaries are the largest single cost for most organizations. Companies are reluctant to lay off trained people for fear of not being able to find qualified people when the economy picks up.

There are some alternatives to layoffs, however. One would be to reduce work hours. For instance, if you had 30 employees and wanted to cut your cost by approximately 10%, you could cut back everyone's hours by 10% rather than laying off three people. Other alternatives to layoffs include cutting pay or postponing pay increases.

The least-disruptive cost cuts result from a combination of alternatives. Including the employees in the decision-making process often makes the cuts more understandable and avoids negative effects on morale.

Nearly every company can admit to having some waste. Tough times make it essential to look hard at your ways, and work to eliminate wasteful practices.

Appointing watchdogs to look for waste in different parts of the business is one effective way to find and eliminate waste. There is waste in your offices, shops, yards and in just the day-to-day running of your business.

### Economic opportunity, too

During down economic cycles, suppliers also feel the pain. They want to move product to keep their overhead covered. Make sure to renegotiate pricing in light of this. Construction has been hit very hard in most areas, resulting in dramatically lower prices for plant materials in many markets.

We recommend using the tight economy as a reason to look for waste even if you are not being affected by the economic conditions. In past recessions, the stronger companies usually came out even stronger following the recession cycle.

With more people out of work, opportunities also exist to upgrade your work force. There is less competition for college graduates this year, so you may be able to find some good talent for future development.

In addition, prices for new trucks have come down dramatically — there is opportunity to upgrade your fleets. Demand for equipment is down, so opportunities exist here also. Companies that have managed their cash well are in a great position to benefit from these circumstances.

In good times and bad, maintaining a balance is always the best practice.

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





**SHIFT GEARS:**

**To drive your bottom line.**



**With Rain Bird® 5000 Series Rotors, it's about greenbacks, not callbacks.**

*"Ever since I started using Rain Bird's 5000 rotors, I never get callbacks from my customers. Never. And that's money in the bank."*

—Bryan Harris,  
Harris & Company

- Greener grass with Rain Curtain™ nozzle technology.
- More greenbacks in your pocket.
  - Faster installs with no special tools needed.
  - No callbacks from customers about brown spots.
  - Value-priced and backed by a five-year warranty.

For additional product details, consult with your Rain Bird salesperson, or visit [www.rainbird.com/shiftgears](http://www.rainbird.com/shiftgears).

**RAIN  BIRD®**



It's too late to close the door when your cost and revenue horses already have galloped out of the barn.



## Ensure your '09 budget flies

BY KEVIN KEHOE

**T**here are two rules for managing in a tough economy: Control the things you can control, and minimize the risks of things you cannot. You must do both.

For example, you *can* control (increase or decrease) your costs.

Your decisions drive this number. But you can only minimize the risks of revenue disruptions and/or revenue creation because your customers ultimately control these factors.

Your actions only influence this number.

► **Start with cost control.** Eighty percent of your costs are related to staffing, equipment, insurance and rent. You

have some leverage in controlling insurance and rent, but you have a lot more clout with staffing and equipment expenses. In a down market, you must downsize these costs and stretch these resources more thinly than you might like. If revenues do not materialize — or if they're taken away by competitors — you will wish later that you had made some tough cost-reduction decisions upfront. Tighten your belt now for 2009.

► **Minimize the risks to your revenue streams.**

The chief risks are low pricing, declining customer budgets, insufficient new sales activity, and slow

and late renewals. Your customers will be looking for lower pricing and/or more value in 2009. They will want you to save them money. If you do not find them a path to savings, they will find someone who will. After you make your 2009 budget, refine your pricing model. Reducing costs will help with pricing by lowering your burden and recovery markup rates.

You must be proactive in meeting with your customers to restructure your service deliverables and to better help them meet their budgets. Develop several service and pricing options for their consideration. This may mean delivering less-than-perfect landscapes to some of your customers. But it is better than losing the revenue.

► **Stay in front of your customers.** Get out of the office and talk to them often. Start your renewal process earlier in the year, especially with your biggest customers. Talk with them frequently enough to address their changing economic situations. Customers appreciate flexibility and ingenuity even more in a tough market. Relationships still matter, but they are based more on mutual economic realities.

2009 is going to be the toughest year yet in grounds maintenance. My clients are experiencing this already with falloffs in enhancement sales and with price negotiations on renewals. Construction has had its two worst years in a long time, and the pain is about to spread to our industry. Don't get caught. Act early. It's too late to close the door when the cost and revenue horses already have galloped out of the barn.

— *The author is the owner-manager of Kehoe & Co.*

Contact him at [kkehoe@earthlink.net](mailto:kkehoe@earthlink.net).







syngenta

Early applications make for a carefree spring.

As the longest-lasting pre-emergence weed control available, Barricade® herbicide takes the worry out of spring. Even fall applications can withstand snow and heavy spring rains. We're so confident Barricade will remain in the soil ready to control crabgrass that we guarantee against breakthroughs. See details and sign up at [www.BarricadeGuarantee.com](http://www.BarricadeGuarantee.com). Contact your distributor and order now for the best value of the season.

1-866-SYNGENTA • [BarricadeGuarantee.com](http://BarricadeGuarantee.com)

©2008 Syngenta. Syngenta Professional Products, Greensboro, NC 27419. **Important: Always read and follow label instructions before buying or using this product.** Barricade® and the Syngenta logo are trademarks of a Syngenta Group Company.





Going to the next level means taking our people to the next level first.



## People drive lean successes

BY JIM PALUCH

**W**e have learned over the past couple of years observing people applying Working Smarter's lean principles that saving money and increasing profits is great, but growing and developing people into leaders is even greater. Smart companies know that without people development, their sales, service and ultimately profits will not occur.

Whenever the goal for a company is stated as "taking it to the next level," we must first begin with developing the people in that company and positioning them with the skills and tools to go to the next level. We call this the Working Smarter cycle, which covers:

**Quality of life:** Madison Planting and Design Group in Jackson, MS, was able to put its employees on a four-day workweek because of a commitment to Working Smarter.

The results were improved quality of life for employees and reduced expenses for the company. When the ultimate goal is to improve quality of life, both your company and its employee will benefit.

**Happy customers:** When your customers are happy, how do you feel? What will happy customers do for us? There are a lot of exciting answers to these questions. This is illustrated in lean terms when we drive out waste and add value to our customers.

**Processes:** Think about the impact that processes have on determining the status of our customers. If we're getting out of our yards late every morning, or constantly battling equipment problems, billing mistakes and other issues, it's difficult to have happy customers. When these processes are continuously improving, however, then every aspect of our service helps create happy, satisfied customers.

**Culture:** For a company to focus successfully on improving a given process, a culture must be nurtured to allow open discussion and evaluation. When a spirit of trust among employees is created to the point that blame is not a strategy in trying to improve, then fear of change is minimized and continuous improvement occurs.

**People:** As a company takes steps to develop, inspire and bring out the best in its people, then and only then can there be belief in its new culture — which, in turn, allows for continuous process improvements that add value to the customer experience and improve coworkers' quality of life.

Last but not least, remember: If we try to short-cut the Working Smarter cycle at any point, we will run into resistance and any positive change will stall or even fail. Successful lean journeys begin with our people — true teams committed to continuously moving through the Working Smarter cycle.

— The author is president of JP Horizons Inc., and has partnered with Ariens and hundreds of other companies to develop the Working Smarter Training Challenge.

To learn how you can benefit from being involved in the program, visit [www.jp horizons.com](http://www.jp horizons.com).

### MONTHLY CHALLENGE

Take the time to sit with your employees and discuss their thoughts on the Working Smarter cycle and how it impacts them.

# Sure you can cut it. The question is, can you grow it?

You know Gravelly has an impressive lineup of powerful, high-performance mowers. What you might not know is that Gravelly also has a program to help you grow your business. It's a lean approach that streamlines your operation by eliminating waste and inefficiencies. It's a process that creates avenues for sustained profitability. It's a boost to employee morale. You're doing everything you can. We're saying **CUT IT OUT**. Take the first step toward working smarter. Not harder.

Visit [WWW.GRAVELY.COM](http://WWW.GRAVELY.COM).

**GRAVELLY**

WE KEEP YOU CUTTING®  
[www.gravelly.com](http://www.gravelly.com)



An Ariens Company. ® Registered trademark and ™ trademark of Ariens Company.





## EASY INSTALLATION IS A LOK.

Who says there are no sure things in construction? Hardscapes built and designed with VERSA-LOK are a cinch to go up quickly and easily. Our pinned in place design makes perfect installation and structural stability a sure thing. When you use VERSA-LOK, once it's built, it's built to last. And last. And last. To create retaining walls, freestanding walls, columns, steps and more with no need for special units, there's only one product to trust. Simple, reliable and beautiful. That's the VERSA-LOK promise.

To find out why contractors prefer VERSA-LOK, call **(800) 770-4525** or visit **[www.versa-lok.com](http://www.versa-lok.com)**.



*Freestanding Walls*



*Mosaic Random Face Patterns*



*Fully Integrated Stairs*



*Random-Pattern Tall Walls*



*Freestanding Columns*



*Multi-Angle Corners*

**VERSA-LOK**<sup>®</sup>  
Retaining Wall Systems  
*Solid Solutions*<sup>™</sup>

© 2008 Kiltie Corporation • Oakdale, MN



# Design/Build

www.landscapedesign-build.com

## SNAPSHOT

### The McCalla residence

» Chicago winters prevented this former Californian family from enjoying their new home year round — before Grant & Power Landscaping turned the property into an interactive retreat not limited by the seasons.

A severe incline, an unattractive, terraced 4-ft. concrete-block retaining wall extending the width of the property, and extensive drainage issues were the main complications — but Grant & Power leveraged these aspects as the project's backbone.

Now a stream rushes down the slope before bursting through the retaining wall. Layers of natural stone create a waterfall and provide reinforcement. Drainage from the entire block is funneled through the yard, then routed underground into a storm sewer. Foliage cascades along the incline, softening the grade and blending the existing landscape with the introduced. Flower color and plant texture add impact while reinforcing a calm atmosphere.

Whether it's a summer evening or winter morning, the McCalla residence features sites and sounds not often found in a suburban backyard.

Color Cues 43

Project Portfolio 44





# Turning Green into Gold



*You can't afford to miss  
this golden opportunity!*

- Countless products and services to enhance your operation
- Industry experts to help you build your business and boost sales
- Strategic ideas for tough economic times
- Convenient location with easily accessible parking, meeting rooms, meals, and more!

*The Midwest's premier  
green industry event  
just got better.*

***New Location!***  
***McCormick Place West***  
January 14-16, 2009  
Chicago, Illinois

## **Mid-America Horticultural Trade Show**

January 14-16, 2009  
McCormick Place West  
Chicago, Illinois



Visit **seemidam.org**  
for details and registration.

**800-223-8761**

# Color Cues

DESIGN/BUILD

WORK WITH YOUR GROWER

## Partnering plan key

**P**artnering with your color supplier is the best way to ensure you get the quality plants you want. Here's a color partnering plan to accomplish just that:

► **12 months before installation:** Think "next year" when cleaning up landscape beds. Keep records of the site conditions (light

levels, soil conditions, etc.), how each plant variety performed, and client feedback. Take pictures and talk to your grower at the end of the season.

► **6 to 9 months before installation:** Place your initial order. Determine color palette, establish varieties and review photos of what worked. Review items you wanted but could not get. Order those first. Your grower can help you select the best varieties for your region. Discuss timing and site delivery: Rootbound, overgrown plants are the No. 1 reason annuals don't perform. Ask your grower to deliver directly to your job sites.

► **4 to 6 months before installation:** Place your final order. Order spring bedding plants in the fall and fall plants in the spring. The earlier you order, the longer your grower has to get specific varieties. Specialty items and newer varieties often sell out quickly. Confirm your order. Discuss variety selection and the preferred sizes and types of growing containers. Order 70% to 80% of your yearly needs in advance. Pick core items



you know you will use. Fill in with available plant material when renewals are signed. Schedule the delivery. Shipping on racks, pallets or loose flats impacts time at job sites. Plan inspection visits with your grower. You don't want to find out there's a crop problem a week before an installation.

► **1 month before installation:** Confirm the delivery date and method. Visit your grower to inspect your crop. Confirm your order for quantity and color.

► **1 week before installation:** Notify your grower on timing and/or delivery. Make sure the site has ample space to hold the plant material, or arrange for grower racks to be available. Schedule the foreman, equipment and crew. Establish crew tasks, including unloading, bed preparation and watering in. Your grower can be an invaluable partner as you plan your clients' projects. Plan your work and work your plan. Great plants from a great supplier are the first steps to a great landscape. **LJM**

Make money with



Landscapers across North America turn to Ball – the world's largest supplier of ornamental color to commercial growers – for fast, easy and profitable landscape solutions.



Request your free Landscape Color photo CD & newsletter at [balllandscape.com](http://balllandscape.com)

800 879-BALL

© 2008 Ball Horticultural Company  
BALL is a registered trademark of  
Ball Horticultural Company.  
BHC08273-LJM

Ball®



# Project Portfolio

DESIGN/BUILD

POOL UPDATES / OUTDOOR KITCHEN / YARD REFRESH

## The design

New York transplants want to live the California dream

### Project Requirements

- Budget range: \$200,000
- Provide a place to entertain
- Incorporate both water and fire features

### Project Specifics

- Update hardscape
- Update both front and back yards
- Work hands-on with client



## Project Principals

- Designed by Scott Cohen, The Green Scene, Canoga Park, CA, [www.greenscenelandscape.com](http://www.greenscenelandscape.com)
- The Green Scene specializes in hardscapes, lighting, woodwork and waterscapes. Cohen recently taught two seminars during the Backyard Living Expo in Las Vegas last month. For more information about Cohen, see "Winners: The Green Scene," in LM's March issue.

**ABOVE LEFT** In this "before" shot of the front yard, some of the plantings were kept and others removed. Designer Scott Cohen notes a lot of different grasses were used.

**ABOVE** Plantings include fescue, purple fountain grass, mondo grass, New Zealand flax, papyrus, horsetail, foxtail ferns and dwarf heavenly bamboo.





**ABOVE** When the clients relocated to California from New York, they quickly realized their new back yard's pool and grilling area hadn't been revamped since the 1970s, when their Mediterranean-style house was built.

**ABOVE** The pool is plastered in a mix of blue and black 3M Colorquartz with a white plaster base. Black glass tiles with an iridescent quality accent the waterline and blend with the slate coping. The clients gutted the interior and turned the house into a contemporary showplace, and wanted a landscape with similar clean, elegant lines.

**BELOW** The client found a stainless steel tile that was incorporated into the outdoor kitchen backsplash and on a recessed panel in the counter walls. It tied in well with the steel weirs that spill from the spa and back of the pool. The outdoor kitchen was completely remodeled and was constructed with polished cast concrete countertops.





It's now time to buckle down and understand what changes for technology are coming during the next four years.



## Is Obama the tech president

BY TYLER WHITAKER

**B**y most accounts, this past presidential election cycle has been exhausting. Excitement from both sides was generated by the prospect a conclusion — any conclusion.

Regardless of whether you voted for Barack Obama, it's time to understand the technology changes coming in the next four years.

Obama has been labeled as the first "Internet president." His ability to organize and communicate online was a new twist for presidential elections. His use of social networking and other Web sites sets him apart. The question is whether his use of technology will continue in the White House.

### Chief technology officer

Obama plans to appoint the nation's first chief technology officer (CTO), to ensure our government uses best-in-class technologies and each agency shares best practices. The CTO will also be responsible for the safety of our networks.

Raising technology policy to a national level can only help to bring the best minds of the country together. The challenge will be to find someone with enough government experience coupled with the tech credibility to be effective in the position.

### Increased government transparency

Clearly, this is not just a technology problem to be solved. But the development and use of cutting-

edge technology to create a new level of transparency, accountability and participation for America's citizens will clearly be a huge step forward.

The concern is that old-school Washington will be hesitant to have the reality of governance-by-compromise laid out for the American public.

### Next-generation broadband

It goes without saying that any increase in Internet bandwidth and connectivity is a good thing. Obama is suggesting that this is possible through reforming the Universal Service Fund, use of wireless spectrum, next-gen technology, and tax and loan incentives.

### Energy

We are all be aware of the need for clean and renewable domestic energy sources. Obama's plan calls for \$150 billion over the next 10 years to advance biofuels, plug in hybrids, promote development of commercial-scale renewable energy, and begin the transition to a new digital electricity grid. The plan would create 5 million new jobs. I'll be excited to see a plan with specifics.

It's easy, reading Obama's technology plan, to find goals with which I agree. Campaign promises are built that way for a reason. What will really impress me is if these promises materialize in meaningful and effective ways. That will be the true measure of Obama's influence on technology.

— The author is a freelance technologist focusing in business automation. Contact him at 801/592-2810 or visit his blog at [www.tylerwhitaker.com](http://www.tylerwhitaker.com).



**THE COMPANY YOU CAN BUILD ON.®**

AND DRIVE ON. AND GROW ON. AND COUNT ON.



**Tensar International Corporation** improves property values by providing technology-driven site solutions for common earthwork problems such as grade changes requiring retaining walls, and poor soil conditions affecting the cost of roadways, parking lots and building structures. Engineered around patented Tensar® Geogrids, these systems offer cost-effective, reliable solutions.

**Expect proven performance from Tensar, including these innovative systems:**



**Spectra® System:** For subgrade improvement and base aggregate reinforcement in roadway applications, the Spectra Roadway Improvement System optimizes flexible pavement systems by simplifying construction, extending service life and reducing aggregate fill costs.



**Mesa® Systems:** The Mesa Retaining Wall Systems combine the economy and versatility of segmental concrete units with proven geogrid technology to create a new standard in structural wall systems. The Mesa Units' unique locking connector creates a positive, mechanical connection that results in unsurpassed reliability.



**SierraScape® System:** For creating more usable land on uneven terrain, the SierraScape Retaining Wall System provides a cost-effective solution. In combination with, or in place of concrete retaining walls, this wire-formed system offers three different facing options – vegetated, stone-filled or bioengineered.

For the competitive edge, depend on Tensar International Corporation to help you reduce costs and increase property value on your next project.

Call **888-827-9962** for a no-obligation review of your site plans or visit [www.tensarcorp.com/m2](http://www.tensarcorp.com/m2).



**Tensar**  
INTERNATIONAL

A **tensar** Company



## Turfco's T3000 sprayer-spreader sets a new standard for applicators

BY MARTY WHITFORD / Editor-in-Chief

**T**he verdict's in on Turfco's patent-pending T3000 Applicator. By all user accounts, the new sprayer-spreader marks a revolutionary — not just evolutionary — advancement in applicator technology.

"I've been using Turfco's T3000 for more than six months, and can wholeheartedly vouch that not only does this new applicator deliver the most comfortable ride on the market, but it also completely redefines the labor and fuel efficiency standard," said Jason Collins,

owner of Earthscape Plant Health Service.

"Turfco's T3000 is boosting our fertilizer program productivity, and related sales, 100% to 150%," Collins noted. "We'll add \$120,000 to \$150,000 in annual fertilizer program sales with just the one T3000 we purchased. That's why we'll be doubling up and buying a second Turfco T3000 next March. Why not? It's proven to pay for itself in less than a month."

### User-Designed

After Turfco conducted extensive beta testing on the T3000, the company decided to kick it up a few notches on its

partnering with end users.

"We created an 'A Team' of lawn care pros from around the country who bought our T3000 and agreed to report regularly and extensively on the applicator from April until September," said George Kinkead, president of Minneapolis-based Turfco Manufacturing. "In the past six months, we made more than 20 key modifications to the T3000 thanks to our A Team and previous beta testers. Many of these industry-first advancements could have only come from end users' close and constant unbridled input."

Earthscape's Collins was on Turfco's T3000 A Team. So was Matt Nichols with Jonny Nichols Landscape Maintenance, who said, "With the T3000, our average stop time per round went from 38 minutes

## TAS TRIMMER

"work smarter... not harder"

QUICK & EASY  
ATTACHES TO ANY  
STRAIGHT SHAFT  
LINE TRIMMER

SOLID STEEL  
CONSTRUCTION  
OUTLASTS THE COMPETITION

TAS TRIMMER G.C. 8  
MSRP \$34.95

LESS IS MORE  
TRIM UP TO 1600 HEADS  
WITH 1 TAS TRIMMER

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

TOLL FREE (866) 231-0778





to 20 minutes, which has helped us reduce our fuel and labor costs while enabling us to grow our customer base."

#### Features & benefits

Scott Kinkead, Turfco's executive vice president, said the T3000 stand-on riding applicator's features include:

- ▶ An ergonomically friendly steering wheel to circumvent common operator fatigue while improving application accuracy;
- ▶ A pivoting front axle and floating platform to minimize strain and shock on the operator;
- ▶ Cruise control so the user can easily operate the machine's multitude of spraying and spreading options while driving;
- ▶ Unparalleled control and stability — even on slopes and uneven ground — thanks to smartly positioned saddle tanks, a low center of gravity and a hydrostatic transaxle braking system;
- ▶ The ability to fit through a 36-in. gate for residences and then complete a 64,000 sq. ft. commercial application with a single fill;
- ▶ An adjustable high-pressure/high-velocity spray system for larger droplets, better coverage, less drift and fewer callbacks;
- ▶ Separate spray/spread systems, but matching application widths at 6 ft. and 9 ft.; and
- ▶ The ability to quickly adjust the rate for trimming widths to eliminate over-application and fertilizer waste.

For partnering so extensively with lawn care pros and jointly developing such proven productivity and profitability gains, Turfco's new T3000 Applicator is my "Pick of the Show" for this year's GIE+EXPO. For more information on the T3000 sprayer-spreader, please call 800-679-8201 or visit [www.turfco.com](http://www.turfco.com) or [www.turfcodirect.com](http://www.turfcodirect.com).

**Pine Hall Brick**  
earth friendly...naturally green

P.O. Box 11044, Winston-Salem, NC 27116-1044 800.334.8689 [www.americaspremierpaver.com](http://www.americaspremierpaver.com)

- Wide range of paver colors and styles.
- Exceeds all ASTM C902 requirements.
- Clay pavers can contribute to design strategies for LEED certification.

- Size consistent and versatile - often reversible.
- Extremely durable - strong and colorfast.
- Low environmental impact for manufacturing and building operation and maintenance.

## THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE!

From the **Z-MAX** at 50 gallons of liquid and 300 lbs of fertilizer, to the **Junior-36** with 18 gallons and 200 lbs, no other company offers you more choices.



- Hydraulic drive hopper
- Suspension foot plate
- All laser cut stainless steel
- Enclosed boom system
- GPS wireless speedometer
- Zero-turn maneuverability
- 4 GPM pump



**L.T. RICH** PRODUCTS, INC.

Check out all the new features at [www.z-spray.com](http://www.z-spray.com) or call 877-482-2040

Patents Pending



# U.S. LAWNNS.

GROW YOUR LANDSCAPE  
MAINTENANCE BUSINESS.

NATIONAL STRENGTH, LOCAL COMMITMENT<sup>SM</sup>

## Want to Own a High Profile Franchise?

Does your business provide:

- Economic Stability
- Recurring Income
- Low Investment/Overhead
- Offers Financial Assistance
- Ongoing Support by Industry Professionals

Our four ideals, **Trust, Quality, Service and Value**, along with a "No Job Is Too Big Or To Small" philosophy, make U. S. Lawns a "cut above" the rest.

- Superior Financial Management
- Sales & Marketing Guidance
- Corporate Purchasing Power
- Protected Territories

NATIONAL STRENGTH, LOCAL COMMITMENT<sup>SM</sup>

To find out more about us and the opportunity U.S. Lawns can offer you, contact:

U.S. Lawns

4407 Vineland Road • Suite D-15 • Orlando, FL 32811

Toll Free: 1-800-USLAWNS • Phone: (407) 246-1630

Fax: (407) 246-1623 • Email: info@uslawns.com

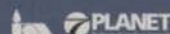
Website: www.uslawns.com



## More Solutions. Greater Quality.



Whether your project calls for Valley View Landscape Edging, Diamond-Lok<sup>®</sup> Paver/Brick Edging or Venus<sup>®</sup> planters and trash receptacles – no company delivers more guaranteed quality than Valley View. Don't settle for less!



www.valleyviewind.com ♦ ph 800-323-9369

## Products

### ► EDITOR'S NOTE:



Following is just a sampling of the many innovative products LM editors uncovered at the recent 2008 GIE+Expo in Louisville, KY.

### Sun-loving mower

Husqvarna's Automower Solar Hybrid is a fully robotic lawn mower partly powered by the sun and uses no fuel or oil. Designed to handle lawns of up to a half-acre, the emissions-free unit uses considerably less energy than conventional mowers. When there is daylight available, the solar cells enable the 22-lb. mower to extend its cutting periods before requiring a recharge. Lower power consumption and an extended battery life enable a faster, more environmentally responsible cut. Three razor-like blades cut the grass cleanly and more often than a traditional mower; resulting in shorter clippings that decompose faster and provide a natural fertilizer for better-looking yards. [www.automower.com](http://www.automower.com)



[www.landscapemanagement.net/search](http://www.landscapemanagement.net/search)



### Clean sweep

Agri-Fab's new SmartSWEEP 44 lawn sweeper boasts seven patent-pending features and eliminates wheel skipping, the No. 1 frustration among users of existing sweepers. For use behind conventional tractors, as well as zero-turn mowers, SmartSWEEP delivers myriad benefits, including: compact storage; easy dumping; high-performance, one-pass pick up; large bag capacity and zero-turn compatibility. Backed by a three-year warranty, the device incorporates additional tough, rugged components under a contemporary design.

[www.agri-fab.com](http://www.agri-fab.com) / 800-448-9282

[www.landscapemanagement.net/search](http://www.landscapemanagement.net/search)



## Easy aeration

The new Mow-Aerator from GAILCO Innovations is a simple set of brackets and 1.5-in. spikes made of .125-in. cold rolled steel that attaches to a riding mower's tires.

As you mow the lawn, the spikes do the work of aerating — supplying the soil with air and helping water and fertilizer move into the root zone. When aeration is not needed, the Mow-Aerator is easily removed.

[www.mow-aerator.com](http://www.mow-aerator.com) / 770-975-6516

[www.landscapemanagement.net/search](http://www.landscapemanagement.net/search)



## Hydraulic transfer

With the ability to carry and discharge a variety of materials, including aggregate,



soil mixes, mulch, sand and palletized loads, Finn's new MTS (Material Transfer System) uses a state-of-the-art hydraulic system that is electronically controlled to enhance productivity and minimize effort for end users. Among its features is a reversible main floor conveyor and cross belt. Speeds for both are independently adjustable, allowing complete control over material flow rates. The unit features a 15-cu.-yd., 11,200-lb. capacity hopper constructed of lightweight, yet durable aluminum. [www.finncorp.com](http://www.finncorp.com) / 800-543-7166

[www.landscapemanagement.net/](http://www.landscapemanagement.net/)

Find more tools of the trade at:



[landscapemanagement.net/search](http://landscapemanagement.net/search)



## AERATION HAS NEVER BEEN THIS EASY!



- 19 HP Kawasaki
- 16cc Hydro Gear pumps
- 9 mph ground speed
- 80,000 sq/ft per hour

### Multiple Attachments Available

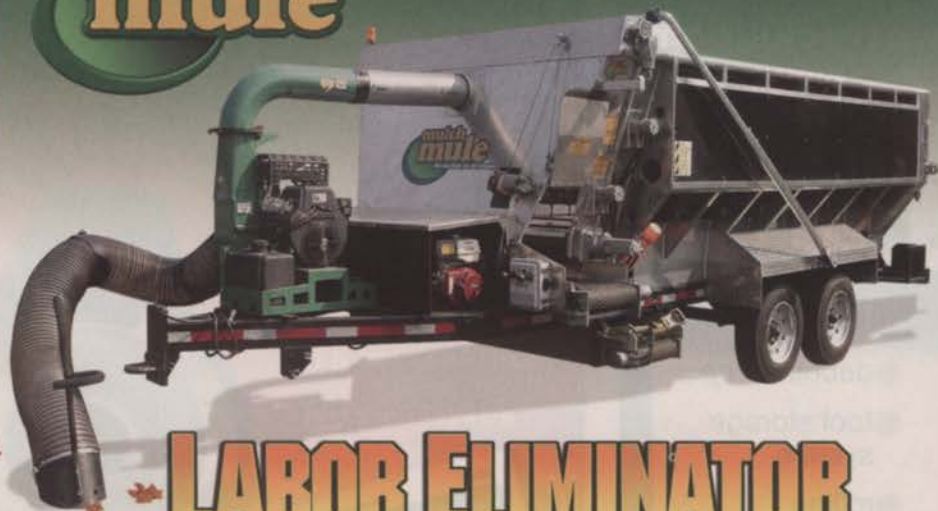


- 20 gal. spray system
- Dethatch Rake
- Slit Seeder
- 120 lbs hopper
- 36"/46" tine heads

**L.T. RICH** PRODUCTS, INC.

Check out all the new features at [www.z-spray.com](http://www.z-spray.com) or call us @ 877-482-2040

# mulch mule



# LABOR ELIMINATOR

### Productivity

With the Mulch Mule you can double or triple your production — do it in up to 1/3 the time with fewer men. Jobs you once didn't have the time or manpower to get is now a reality!

### Versatility

The Mulch Mule has been called the Swiss Army Knife of landscape equipment because it is not just for handling mulch.

7727 Paris Ave. Louisville, OH 44641

• Phone 330-875-0769 / Fax 330-875-0782

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

### MINI MULE TRAILER



### MINI MULE TRUCK



### MULCH MULE TRUCK

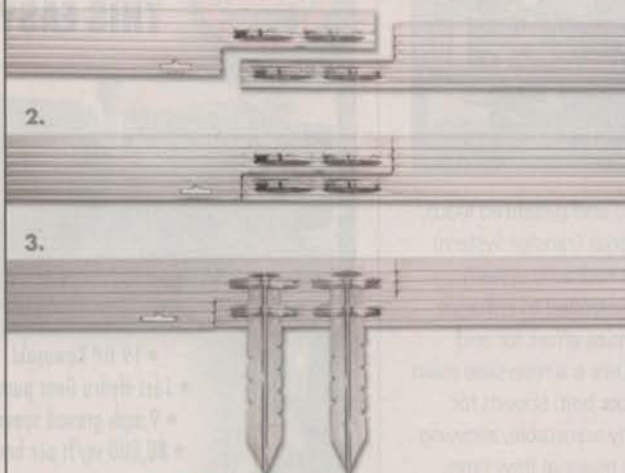


### ROLL-OFF/SKID MULE





## Simple. Seamless. Sure-loc.™

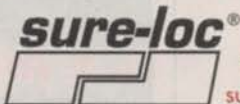
1.  
2.  
3.

Yes! **Sure-loc** Aluminum Landscape Edging really is that **simple** and fast to install.

And, **Sure-loc** Aluminum Landscape Edging is **superior**. Here's why:

- Seamless connections
- Dual stake locking system is permanent
- Includes adapters for staking at any point
- Lasts a lifetime.

For more info, CSI 3 part specifications, CAD files, & photos, visit our website.



1.800.SURE.LOC  
surelocedging.com

## FAST ACTING Bait For Control Of Outdoor Rodent Pests

NEW



- ✓ Voles
- ✓ Pocket Gophers
- ✓ Ground Squirrels



WORLD LEADER IN RODENT CONTROL TECHNOLOGY  
Madison, WI 53704 U.S.A. | www.belllabs.com

Available from your Bell Distributor

## Build Your New Super Lawn Truck Now!

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



- + enclosed truck body
- + debris dumper
- + loading ramps
- + tool storage system
- + fuel transport tanks
- + rolling billboard



FREE Business Plan!

Call us toll-free: 866-923-0027

THE JOBCLOCK®  
THE LANDSCAPER'S TIMECLOCK™

Are you frustrated with second-guessing sloppy, inaccurate handwritten timecards? Each year thousands of companies discover that The JobClock System reduces their payroll by simply allowing them to track their attendance more accurately with less effort! Find out why 500,000+ workers clock in each day with The JobClock System!

Call (888) 788-8463  
or visit  
[www.jobclock.com](http://www.jobclock.com)



EXAKTIME®  
THE JOBCLOCK SYSTEM



## ADVERTISING INFORMATION:

Call Kelli Velasquez at  
800-669-1668 x3767  
or 216-706-3767,  
Fax: 253-484-3080,  
E-mail:  
kvelasquez@questex.com



Payment must be received by the classified closing date.

We accept Visa, MasterCard, and American Express.

Mail LM Box # replies to:  
Landscape Management Classifieds, LM Box # \_\_\_\_\_  
306 W. Michigan St., Suite 200  
Duluth, MN 55802  
(please include LM Box # in address)

Every month the Classified Showcase offers an up-to-date section of the products and services you're looking for. **Don't miss an issue!**

## BUSINESS FOR SALE

**For Sale: Well respected, 25 year old lawn treatment company** with nearly untouchable 96 to 97 percent retention rate, season to season. Over 1,000 accounts. South and west suburbs of Pittsburgh. Contact:  
**Lawn Care**  
P.O. Box 16081  
Pittsburgh, PA 15242

**Design-Build Company** with over 300 maintenance accounts. Key employees will stay. Gross sales over \$1,000,000. Located in booming Hilton Head-Bluffton, SC area. With or without 1 acre commercial property. Serious qualified responses only.  
**Please respond to**  
blufflands@yahoo.com

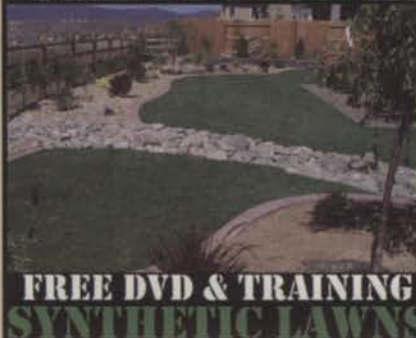
## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

### SELL MORE LANDSCAPES & JOBS



Two **NEW** Profit Centers - 50%+  
Two **NEW** Revenue Streams  
Two **NEW** Customer Bases  
A Simple, Easy Add-On Service  
Buy Factory Direct - Wholesale  
**NO PAYMENTS & INTEREST**  
**FOR 90 DAYS**  
We **FUND** Your Installs  
1-800-334-9005  
[www.allprogreens.com/training](http://www.allprogreens.com/training)

### SELL MORE LANDSCAPES & JOBS



Two **NEW** Profit Centers - 50%+  
Two **NEW** Revenue Streams  
Two **NEW** Customer Bases  
A Simple, Easy Add-On Service  
Buy Factory Direct - Wholesale  
**NO PAYMENTS & INTEREST**  
**FOR 90 DAYS**  
We **FUND** Your Installs  
1-800-334-9005  
[www.allprogreens.com/training](http://www.allprogreens.com/training)

All Landscape Management classifieds are posted online.

# Did you know?

[landscapemanagement.net](http://landscapemanagement.net)

## BUSINESS OPP. CONT'D

### Get Rich Every Christmas!

**Christmas Decor Franchises Experience:**

Average **27% NET PROFITS** with:

- Ⓜ **\$1,962 Average Installation**
- Ⓜ **Exclusive Products**
- Ⓜ **Proven Marketing**
- Ⓜ **Reduced Risks**

Call today!!

800-687-9551

[www.christmasdecor.net](http://www.christmasdecor.net)

### THE COMPANY CORPORATION

INCORPORATING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

If you're in the **lawn care** business, treat it like one. **Protect your personal assets now.** Incorporate or form an LLC today with The Company Corporation in 10 minutes or less.

Visit [www.incorporate.com](http://www.incorporate.com) or call 800-616-0216



### WANT TO BUY OR SELL A BUSINESS?

**Professional Business Consultants** can obtain purchase offers from numerous qualified potential buyers without disclosing your identity. There is no cost for this as Consultant's fee is paid by the buyer. This is a **FREE APPRAISAL** of your business.

If you are looking to grow or diversify through acquisition, we have companies available in **Lawn Care, Grounds Maintenance, Pest Control and Landscape Installation** all over the U.S. and Canada.

182 Homestead Avenue, Rehoboth, MA 02769

708-744-6715 • Fax 508-252-4447

E-mail [pbcmello1@aol.com](mailto:pbcmello1@aol.com)



## FOR SALE



**Turbo Technologies, Inc.**  
1-800-822-3437  
[www.TurboTurf.com](http://www.TurboTurf.com)

## GREEN ROOFS/NATIVES & CONSERVATION

Large selection of Plugs, Perennials, Grasses, Natives & Conservation.

**CHIEF MOUNTAIN FARMS**  
ph 443-350-3894 fax 410-658-7331  
[www.chiefmountainfarms.com](http://www.chiefmountainfarms.com)

## PADLOCKS

- Any Padlocks • Any Key
  - Any Quantity • Low Prices
- Unconditionally Guaranteed Quick-Shipped!*

Plus equipment keys for landscaping equipment

**ORDER ONLINE!**

**LockMasters USA • 1-800-461-0620**

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

Sales@lockmastersusa.com • Fax 850-914-9754



**enhance**  
your ad with color

## Landscape MANAGEMENT

### Upcoming Ad Closing Dates:

February.....1/9/2009  
March.....2/5/2009  
April.....3/6/2009

Contact Kelli Velasquez today:  
800-669-1668 x3767 or [kvelasquez@questex.com](mailto:kvelasquez@questex.com)



## HELP WANTED



### SERPICO LANDSCAPING, INC.

A successful 17-year-old business in the SF Bay Area has dynamic opportunities for experienced landscape maintenance professionals to join us as:

- Account Managers
- Branch Managers

For Info. Call (510) 293-0341  
[jobs@serpicolandscaping.com](mailto:jobs@serpicolandscaping.com)

## Looking to hire?



Reach **thousands** of professionals in your industry by placing a classified ad.



## BRICKMAN

*Enhancing the American Landscape Since 1939*

Brickman is looking for leaders who are interested in growing their careers with a growing company.

Nationwide career and internship opportunities available in:

- Landscape Management
- Landscape Construction
- Irrigation
- Accounting
- Business Administration

Start growing your career at:  
[brickmangroup.com](http://brickmangroup.com)

## U.S. LAWN

**NO ONE KNOWS THE  
LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE  
INDUSTRY LIKE WE DO.**



Use your experience as an Account Manager, Operations Mgr., Branch Manager or Regional Manager to work for you.

E-mail resume to [hr@uslawns.net](mailto:hr@uslawns.net) or fax to 407/246-1623.



[landscapemanagement.net](http://landscapemanagement.net)

## SOFTWARE

### Wintac™

*The #1 all-in-one software for lawn care and landscaping contractors*



Scheduling, Routing CRM, Service History Job Costing, Estimating Inventory, Purchasing Automatic Billing, Invoicing AR/AP, Payroll, Accounting Marketing, Vehicle Management

Check out the amazing software that landscaping contractors everywhere are talking about!

[www.wintac.net](http://www.wintac.net) 1-800-724-7899



[www.  
landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net)



Agrotain	p21
Ariens	p39
Ball Horticulture	p43
BASF Corp	p13, 27, 33
Bell Laboratories	p52
Berkshire Products	p55
Chemical Containers	p7
Dodge	pCV3
Drafix	p28
E Z Trench	p6
Exakttime	p14, 52
Farmsaver	p17
Finn Corp	p26
Ford	pCV2-1
G M C Truck	p15
Green Industry Innovators	p51
Gulf States Horticultural Expo	p30
Hustler	p11
JRCO	p55
Kawasaki Motors	p9
L T Rich	p49, 51
Mid Am	p42
Monsanto	p23
Oly Ola	p6
Oregon Tall Fescue	p2
Pine Hall Brick	p49
Progressive Insurance	p31

## EDITORIAL INDEX

Ariens	38
Brickman Group	16
Bruce Co.	12
General Motors	56
Green Scene	44
JP Horizons	38, 56
Kehoe & Co.	36
Lawn Dawg Inc.	32
LCPro	32
Madison Planting and Design Group	38
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health	10
PLANET	30, 32
STIHL	12
Toyota Motor Manufacturing	56
Veridian Homes	12
Vila & Son Landscapign Corp.	19
Wilson-Oyler	34

Indices are provided as an additional service. The publisher does not assume any liability for errors or omissions.

Pro-Tech	p20
Quick Attach	p5
Rain Bird	p35, CV4
Rhino Linings	p16
Super Lawn Trucks	p52
Sure Loc	p52
Syngenta	p37
Target Specialty Products	p29A
Tas Industries	p48
Tensar	p47
Trynex	p22
U S Lawns	p50
Valley View	p50
Versa Lok	p40
Vista Professional	p24
Visual Impact Imaging	p7
Walker Mfg	p25

Access our valued advertisers at:



landscapemanagement.net/search

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT (ISSN 0894-1254) is published monthly (12 issues per year) by Questex Media Group, Inc., 306 W Michigan St, Suite 200, Duluth, MN 55802. **Subscription rates:** one year, \$49, two years \$69 in the United States & Possessions; \$79 for one year, \$115 for two years in Canada and Mexico; all other countries \$150 for one year, \$225 for two years. For airmail delivery, include an additional \$75 per order annually. Single copies (pre-paid only): \$8 in the United States; \$10 in Canada and Mexico; \$15 all other countries. Back issues, if available: \$16 in the U.S.; \$20 in Canada and Mexico; \$30 all other countries. Add \$6.50 per order for shipping and handling. **Periodicals postage paid** at Duluth, MN 55806 and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Please send address changes to Landscape Management, P.O. Box 1268, Skokie, IL 60076-8268; Canadian G.S.T. number: 840 033 278 RT0001. Publications Mail Agreement Number 40017597. Printed in the U.S.A.



Copyright 2008 Questex Media Group, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including by photocopy, recording, or information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients, is granted by Questex Media Group, Inc. for libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Dr., Danvers, MA 01923 phone: 978-750-8400 fax 978-750-4470; call for copying beyond that permitted by Sections 107 or 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law. For those not registered with the CCC, send permission requests to questsexpermissions@reprintbuyer.com or phone 800-494-9051 ext. 100.

Landscape Management does not verify any claims or other information appearing in any of the advertisements contained in the publication, and cannot take any responsibility for any losses or other damages incurred by readers in reliance on such content. Landscape Management welcomes unsolicited articles, manuscripts, photographs, illustrations and other materials but cannot be held responsible for their safekeeping or return. Questex Media Group provides certain customer contact data (such as customers' names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses) to third parties who wish to promote relevant products, services and other opportunities which may be of interest to you. If you do not want Questex Media Group to make your contact information available to third parties for marketing purposes, simply call 847-763-9594 between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:00 pm CT and a customer service representative will assist you in removing your name from Questex Media Group's lists.





**Heavy-duty Attachments for Commercial Mowers**

**JRCO Quality Attachments**

- Great Spring & Fall Clean-up Tools
- Fits for all Brands, Most Models



Call for Dealer  
**800.966.8442**

**Jrco**

See the full line  
[www.jrcoinc.com](http://www.jrcoinc.com)



**patented tree staking systems -- the professional's choice**



traditional wooden stakes



**-OT- Earthwings**

Drive, then Pull to lock in place

**Which would your customers prefer?**

Call (413) 229-7919 or visit [www.BerkshireEarthwings.com](http://www.BerkshireEarthwings.com)



## Lean is the golden ticket

BY MARTY WHITFORD / Editor-in-Chief

**I** felt as fortunate as Charlie Bucket in "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory." The good folks at JP Horizons had given me a golden ticket to tour Toyota Motor Manufacturing's Georgetown, KY, factory.

Granted, I didn't run into any Oompa-Loompas or uncover the secret recipe for Wonka's Everlasting Gobstopper. But what I did learn about lean systems on Oct. 23, along side 120 other attendees of JP Horizons' second Working Smarter Summit, was even more eye-opening than the Candy Man's confectionary concoctions.

The first thing I noticed was Toyota's plant was as clean as a candy factory.

And just like Wonka's wonderful facility, the people and robots worked in perfect harmony, in constant, productive motion. Every person, thing and movement had a well-defined place and purpose.

From the factory's plethora of process maps, to its standard work and seamless flow, to its many score-keeping visuals and team meeting sites, it was obvious that lean is a culture, not a buzzword, at Toyota.

The atmosphere was downright festive. Everyone was smiling as bells chimed and lights flashed above — subtle beacons of lean empowerment.

While stopping production to correct defects is still deemed unthinkable in many businesses, Toyota teammates are *encouraged* to alert each other of problems *before* they are pulled by the next process upstream. Every day, dozens of associates yank andon cords, briefly halting car production and sending their team leaders — and the plant's bells and flashing lights — to work so

mole hills never have the chance to become mountains.

Toyota's warm embrace of lean production systems has had big, fat payoffs. On average, a car rolls off a production line at the Georgetown factory every 55 seconds. Just as impressive as this rapid-fire production rate, Toyota's offspring consistently score among the top vehicles in the world in quality and reliability. You'd never guess that most of the factory's 7,100 teammates had no car manufacturing experience when joining the plant — most worked in other sectors such as on farms, in schools, and some even in rodeos.

It's no wonder America's Big Three car makers are fighting for their lives. For years, too many within the organizations have fought embracing lean systems, especially halting production to assure quality — and now they're paying the price. One GM mishap in September alone placed 944,000 vehicles at risk of electrical fires and has sparked a \$25 million recall.

It's also no wonder that I still feel like I won a golden ticket. I did, and so did Toyota and its teammates and customers. Lean is the golden ticket.

To learn lean and live it is to love it. Just ask our Working Smarter columnist, Jim Paluch, who draws landscape businesses to the lean side as adeptly as Wonka drew children to sugary sweets.

Contact Marty at  
216/706-3766 or e-mail  
mwhitford@questex.com

It's no wonder the Big Three are fighting for their lives. For years, too many within the organizations have fought embracing lean systems.





THE NEW COMMERCIAL STANDARD


GRAB LIFE BY THE HORNS



## BUILT FOR THE LONG HAUL.

**DODGE RAM 4500 AND 5500 CHASSIS CABS.** Inside these new trucks sits the 6.7L Cummins® Turbo Diesel, an engine that's Clean Idle Certified, when properly equipped. That means you can idle as long as you want, instead of hitting the 5-minute limit you have in a Ford or Chevy diesel in certain states. This Cummins puts out 610 lb-ft of torque, and it's rugged enough to be backed by a 5-year/100,000-mile Diesel Engine Limited Warranty.\* Paired with an available, commercial-grade AISIN 6-speed automatic transmission, this powerful combination makes Ram 5500 Chassis Cab 14 percent more fuel efficient than Ford F-550 and 23 percent more than Chevy Kodiak 5500! For more information, go to [dodge.com/chassis\\_cab](http://dodge.com/chassis_cab) or call 800-4ADODGE.

\*The Cummins Turbo Diesel engine is protected by a separate Diesel Engine Limited Warranty, covering the engine for 5 years or 100,000 miles, whichever comes first. See your dealer for complete details. †Estimated fuel economy based on independent testing on 2008 models. When properly equipped. Properly secure all cargo. Cummins is a registered trademark of Cummins, Inc. Independent testing on 2008 models has proven Dodge Ram 5500 more fuel efficient than Ford and Chevy Class 5 chassis cabs, helping you save.

 BUSINESS LINK





Think of this as our own little  
"stimulus package."



Rain Bird®  
DV and JTV  
Valves

NOW STARTING AT

**\$22.50**  
LIST PRICE

### Two great products. More money in your pocket.

Now more than ever, the key to profitability is installing quality products. For years, Rain Bird DV and JTV Series Valves have been known by contractors everywhere for their reliable performance – fewer call-backs, happier customers and more positive job referrals. Now the valves you trust are available at a much lower price, so you can stay profitable even when times get tough. Choose Rain Bird, the irrigation partner you can count on for proven performance.

For more information, see your Rain Bird Distributor or visit [www.rainbird.com](http://www.rainbird.com).

**RAIN**  **BIRD**®