



GREEN INDUSTRY EVENTS, TRENDS AND TIPS

FROM THE FIELD

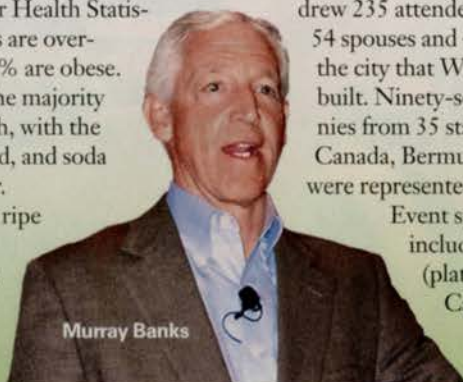
## Time to shape up

Landscapers are 'all ears' at PLANET's Executive Forum as the magical balance of life, work and wellness is unveiled.

BY MARTY WHITFORD EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**T**oo many Americans are in shape — near-circular shape, that is. According to new data from the National Center for Health Statistics, 33% of Americans are overweight and another 34% are obese. That's two-thirds, so the majority rules — from the couch, with the TV remote in one hand, and soda and snacks in the other.

Today is a new day ripe with opportunity for renewed commitment to a magical balance of life, work and



Murray Banks

wellness. That's the take-home message from the Professional Landcare Network's (PLANET's) Executive Forum held Feb. 19-22 at Disney's Beach Club Resort in Orlando, FL.

PLANET's 2009 Executive Forum drew 235 attendees, including 54 spouses and 48 children, to the city that Walt and Mickey built. Ninety-seven companies from 35 states, as well as Canada, Bermuda and India, were represented.

Event sponsors included John Deere (platinum level), Caterpillar (gold level) and Ver-

meer Manufacturing (silver level). CNA sponsored the golf tournament, Cub Cadet the Feb. 20 networking reception, Syngenta the Feb. 21 breakfast, Husqvarna the portfolios, and LandOpt, Agrium and Christmas Décor each sponsored the hospitality suite one night.

### Food for thought

Murray Banks of Peak Presentations and Scott Smith of Motivation to Move are 60 and 49, respectively, but don't let their ages fool you. The wellness/fitness gurus

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## WORD ON THE STREET

How important is family-work balance and what helps you maintain it — especially in this challenging business climate?



our family picture. Other days it's putting the project on the side and getting to the sports game or home to work on homework. Knowing when to leave the office and understanding our work will always be there is key. When things are balanced, work is more productive, pleasant and fun. Work provides the basic needs for our family and our co-workers' families, so it's important — but it's not everything. It's one piece of the God-Family-Work pyramid."

— Lisa Kuperus, vice president of Wantage, NJ-based Farmside Landscape & Design



is needed at the time it is needed, and supplementing that with support from family and friends. Shared responsibility, flexibility, love, faith and humor are core components of our balancing act. My wife Andrea and I have developed a pretty steady rhythm to maintain our two successful careers and the many activities of our children, while also encouraging family time at home. We recognize we set the tone for the family and are sure to make time for each other so our love and affection spreads to our children. Our philosophy is that well-nourished soil enriches the growth process."

— Steven Jomides, president of Westwood, NJ-based Lawns By Yorkshire

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look and act like recent college graduates.

Full of energy, passion and life, the dynamic duo shared with PLANET members their secrets to staying fit, reducing stress, and striking and maintaining the ever-delicate family-work balance — all keys to better harvesting the fun and fruits offered daily by our increasingly intertwined work and home lives.

Wellness — being physically fit and mentally and emotionally well — is America's largely untapped productivity booster, Banks said.

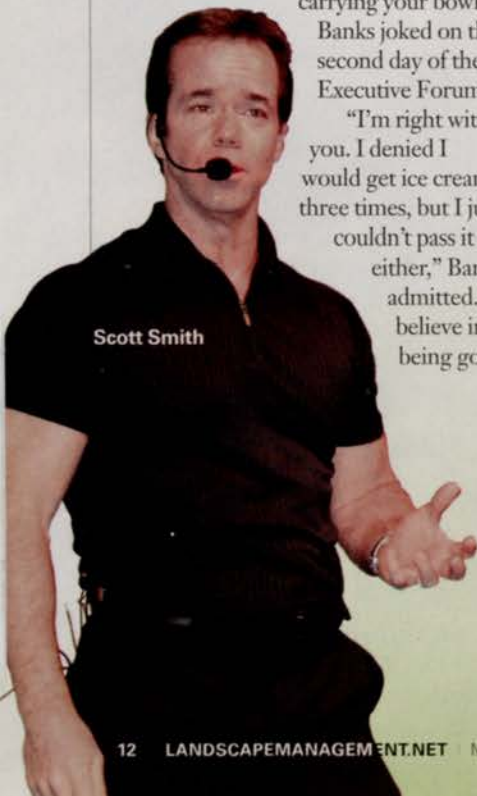
"How's your physical stamina?" Banks asked attendees. "We don't just want to be able to finish each day. We need to start strong, stay strong and finish strong."

"Make no mistake: Wellness and balance are directly tied to the bottom line, but because they're among the many business intangibles, they all too often get ignored," Banks added.

Attendees were "Amen"ing their way through Banks' keynote, but shortly afterward many of us rolled over on our renewed commitment to wellness. The ice cream bar at the welcome reception called our names. Strike that. Its sirens — M&M's, Snickers and other candy mix-ins — sang to our hearts.

"Quite a few of you had wheelbarrows full of ice cream and candy toppings last night. I think you got workouts just carrying your bowls," Banks joked on the second day of the Executive Forum.

"I'm right with you. I denied I would get ice cream three times, but I just couldn't pass it up, either," Banks admitted. "I believe in being good



Scott Smith



Break-out discussions on wellness/fitness, stress management and family-work balance revealed as many solutions as they did issues. » PLANET President Jason Cupp eagerly plays the part of our Stone Age counterparts — cave men who thousands of years ago had many more "acceptable" ways to let off steam.

90% of the time. I exercise a little more to offset the 10% of times I stray a little in my food choices. I walked off that wonderful ice cream after the reception."

### Stress less, move more

Banks urged attendees to create their own Richter Magnitude Scales to weigh seemingly stressful situations.

"When something upsets you, give it a number from 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest stress level. Then give it the energy it deserves.

"A 10 is you receive a call from the hospital concerning a loved one and they say, 'We need you to come in right now.' Everything else is a 9 or below."

Smith added that uncontrolled stress can cost you up to 46% more in health-care costs — for you and each of your stressed-out employees.

"Who weighs 250 lbs. or more?" Smith asked attendees. One attendee with more courage than me (and a few of my portly industry brothers) stood up.

"I was your weight just a few years ago," Smith told the attendee. "I've since lost 85 lbs. and a world of stress. It's as simple as 'Stand up. Take a step. Repeat.'"

### Life balance

When Chris Joyce, president of Marstons Mills, MA-based Joyce Landscaping started his business, and for several years following, he pursued very few non-work related activities.

"For many years, I did nothing but work," said Joyce, noting he really appreciated the PLANET Executive Forum's focus on wellness and balance this year.



"But I got older, got married and became the father of four children," Joyce added. "Work no longer is the most important thing in my life. Family is."

Joyce said most in this industry are very passionate about what they do, so working most of the time comes easy to many — too easy, perhaps.



Chris Joyce

"The need for me to spend more time with my family has made me a better business person," Joyce noted.

"When I realized I could not be there to manage the business 24/7, it made me realize I work with a great team of people empowered by great systems."

Believe it or not, the company still runs when Joyce isn't there. In fact, he admitted sometimes, in some areas, it runs better when he's away or hands-off.

"When I realized this, and learned how to balance a great career with an enriching, full family life, it made for much healthier and enjoyable living," Joyce said. "It also gave my co-workers the opportunity to take on more responsibilities and more fully develop, both professionally and personally."

### WEB EXTRA

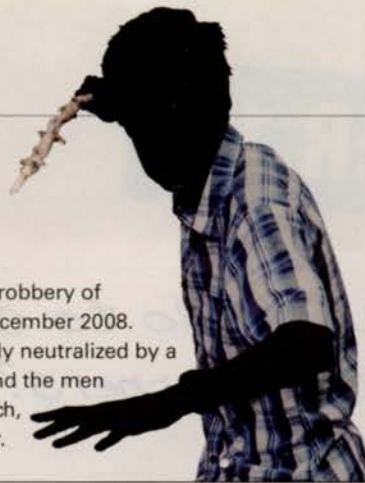
Visit [www.landscapemanagement.net](http://www.landscapemanagement.net) for consultant Bill Arman's advice to Executive Forum attendees on how to harvest their organizations' potentials.

## NEWS+VIEWS

### BELIEVE IT OR NOT ...

#### Armed robbery ... with tree debris?

Michael Reed, 50, was charged with attempted robbery of Eddie's Fried Chicken in Fort Worth, Texas, in December 2008. Armed only with a tree branch, Reed was quickly neutralized by a 56-year-old employee who grabbed a broom and the men proceeded to duel until Reed dropped his branch, fled, and was arrested nearby shortly thereafter.



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## CLIPPINGS

#### Investigating the effects of graywater

FORT COLLINS, CO — Sybil Sharvelle and Larry Roesner, professors with the Urban Water Center in Colorado State's College of Engineering, are in the first year of a three-year \$370,000 graywater study awarded by the Water Environment Research Foundation to investigate the effects of using household graywater for residential landscape irrigation. They are sampling soil, plants and water at homes with graywater systems in California, Arizona, Texas and Colorado.

#### Reinvestment nurtures Natural Way's growth

LAKE ORION, MI — Natural Way Lawn and Tree Care, a landscaping services company, has made the Inc. 5000 List for the country's fastest growing businesses. This 46-employee company was founded in 1991, and has been growing ever since, realizing nearly 85% growth within the past three years. The business sprays trees and fertilizes lawns of single-family homes in and around Detroit.

#### OPEI pushes for E15 delay

ALEXANDRIA, VA — The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) has serious concerns with a premature rush to 15% ethanol (E15) and other mid-level fuel blends as being suggested by pro-ethanol producers. Without a formal waiver process through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and with a continued misinterpretation of test results from a Department of Energy (DOE) report, introducing E15 and higher fuels to the marketplace for existing equipment pose risks to consumers and businesses. OPEI will be submitting a letter to the EPA and DOE urging both agencies to use the existing formal waiver process.