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mowers, two Ryan thatchers, and three sprayers (25, 55, and 100 gallon). These sprayers are geared for hand nozzle spraying, all that is needed for the shrubbery spraying Ladybug does.

Four employees are certified pesticide applicators; all are in a supervisory capacity.

Finding qualified people is getting to be less of a problem according to Timmons. "When I first started there wasn't much interest in maintenance per say, but in the last three years it has begun to change."

"We're getting more and more inquiries from people who are graduating or will be graduating. We do still find, however, that the college graduate is not as interested in maintenance as he is in growing and landscaping, architecture, or design/build, that sort of thing.

"We will expand in the future. The type of things we will go into will be irrigation, the spraying end of the business, and of course, heavier into maintenance. We could possibly develop remedial crews where we go in and refurbish a landscape. I don't think though, at this-point-in-time, that we will get into design/build, reclamation, or that sort of thing."

Timmons feels that government regulations pose a problem. "We're concerned with EPA actions, especially the nematode problem. EPA has taken all the effective chemicals off the market. If we can't cure a problem like nematodes, the grass is slowly but surely going to be eaten up and we won't have any work to do.

"Our industry has made some good strides in the last couple of years. However, I do feel that, as far as a professionalism is concerned, we've still have a long way to go. We're probably the only service business that still is not looked upon as a professional service."

"I think the future of our business is quite bright. I see more large companies getting much larger. I see a lot of opportunity for us. Primarily because bigger and bigger jobs are becoming available. The small guy just is not going to be financially able to handle those kinds of opportunities.

"We do need to work continually to get to the point where we're considered professionals.

## NAUD BURNETT: CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

By Naud Burnett, Dallas, Texas

*Presented during the American Association of Nurserymen's 102nd Annual Convention, July 16-20, 1977, in Seattle, Washington. The presentation was arranged for by the National Landscape Association.*

From its inception, the goals and policies of my companies were based on my personal experiences and observations while working for another firm, gaining invaluable experience over a seven-year period. I had the fortunate experience of being assistant to the president of a large landscape company, and sat in on all private business discussions and client contacts throughout the day. He was a master salesman, with impeccable taste, and I was an interested and observant student of his techniques and decisions.

When the situation occurred for me to leave and start out on my own it was necessary for a deep soul searching of what, where, and how, since my capital was limited. My success has been based on those past experiences, and the desire not to make the mistakes which I had observed of my previous employer. Needless to say, I have, unfortunately, repeated many of those mistakes, but have always recharted my course to correct them.

Basically, the business is built on a complete personal service of a landscape architect from beginning

to end. Personal taste, style, and experience of the landscape architect are extremely important, so that the landscape becomes an integral part of the entire, unified design. The design is based on the client's wishes and utilitarian needs, while being compatible with the architectural design, and reinforcing the architectural concept.

The landscape plan and installation become a personal art form for that specific client, and that particular design would not necessarily fit the needs of another client in the same house or building.

For an insight into our business, the following will explain how and why we do what we do.

I am a graduate landscape architect, and was teaching in college at the age of 19. Teaching did not give me the personal satisfaction I was seeking, so I chose to work in private practice for seven years. This is my twentieth year in business for myself. My goals have changed, and I have sold my business to my key personnel. I am now working for them for a minimum of five years.

Many people cannot understand my selling out and supposedly semi-retiring, but I am satisfied with a well-thought-out plan of financial security, more time with my family, and other business interests. It's now time for another generation to work 12 hours a day.

My interest also lies in the estab-

The landscape plan and installation become a personal art form for the client.



## Naud Burnett

lishment of a new Hydro-Culture industry for growing plants indoors and out-of-doors without soil. It is a revolutionary concept, and is very exciting and stimulating.

We are proud of our 20 awards over the years, but especially the personnel who are responsible for the hard daily work which bring these successful jobs to a completion. Without them, it would not be possible.

Actually, the overall business is divided into two organizations. One handles design and supervision on a professional basis, with a staff of six landscape architects. The other is a landscape company which only installs plantings, with a staff of 30 to 50 employees.

Qualifications for landscape architects are much different than for landscape company personnel. They must show a flair for design, good taste, and quick understanding of problems and solutions. They should be the type of person who would make a good future partner. They can be found only by many interviews with prospective employees, and proving to the specific person that you have something to

offer them as well. Always make sure they understand "no moonlighting".

Landscape personnel qualifications vary with positions, but always honesty, knowledge, and integrity are uppermost in mind. A company-oriented person is always sought.

## Qualifications for landscape architects are much different than for landscape company personnel.

Actually, little business is sought on a landscape level, as 70% is self-generated from a complete package service, and 30% comprises miscellaneous work not involving plans. Two expert sales personnel handle these miscellaneous jobs and bids, as well as the contract work from plans. Only seldom would we bid or install a job planned by another landscape architect. We do no maintenance work.


Our landscape architectural firm keeps a current prospect list (computerized), with a constant update. A regular newsletter is mailed out to this list. It has been highly successful and creates conversation.

Seasonally (twice a year), the landscape company goes back to old clients and plants spring flowers or

bulbs in the fall. This falls into the miscellaneous jobs that are not sought after. It is beneficial in keeping the older gardens blooming and up-to-date, and it allows for corrections in maintenance performed by others.

Approximately 70% of the cost of the average landscape plan is involved in the installation of construction other than plantings. The design firm gets bids from reputable



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qualified contractors, and the figures are outlined on a format so the client can make the selection of the contractor.

Contracts are signed with each individual contractor, and we charge an inspection and coordination fee of 12% of everything except swimming pools, which are 6%. No fee is charged if our company installs the planting, but is charged if done by others.

Fees for work involved are billed monthly, based on amount of bill approved for contractors. Contractors' bills are sent to us for approval, and forwarded to the client to be paid direct to the contractor. Any

Any changes in plans are confirmed by letter to eliminate any misunderstanding.

changes in plans or quotations are confirmed by letter and owner's approval, to eliminate any misunderstanding when the job ends up with a different cost.

The landscape contracts are clearly outlined as to the services, warranty, and materials to be used with a flat quotation for the job. A 30% request for prepayment is made, and subsequent periodic requests for payment are made as work progresses.

Visual aids used are photographic albums, slides shown at the office conference room, and personal tours of existing gardens.

All estimates from both firms are broken down into detail. We have no sales pitch, but rely on our integrity, experience, and reputation. Low key sales: here it is — this is what it costs — you're buying it. We do explain that if they wish, the cost could go up or down with more expensive materials or smaller sizes. Clients seem to be pleased when you say here it is, study it, and we can get back together if you don't want to make the decision today. It is going to be more expensive next year.

All warranties on construction are by contractors. Landscaping warranty covers loss for one year, with a clause for exceptions due to "acts of God." Landscape architects are insured for professional liability for one million dollars.

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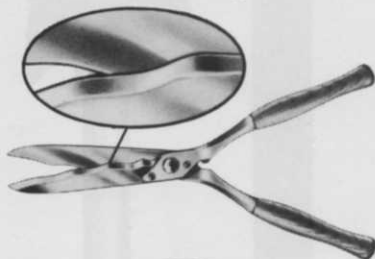
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## LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

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where cost is not as important as quality and responsibility. It personally gives me the satisfaction of seeing beautiful jobs executed; that is as important an ingredient to life as making money. If there is any image we attempt to project, it is that we strive for perfection that is never attained.

Our personnel are trained in weekly meetings, and taking new employees along on appointments.

Charges for landscape plans and specifications are based from experience on time involved in solving a particular problem. In most instances, the fee is a flat fee, but we also do work on percentage and time

We strive for perfection that is never attained.

basis. The plans and specifications are very detailed, and vary in cost from \$400 to \$30,000.

We normally work within a ten state area on landscape plans, and stay within the Dallas metroplex on landscape contracting.

Our sales personnel are urged to wear coats and ties (sometimes difficult in Dallas summers). Planting crews wear uniforms.

We have no sales yard, as we do no retail business, but we have a storage lot where typical specimens may be observed in container or permanently planted in a landscape setting. Our plant holding area is one acre in the central city, and 20 acres on the outskirts of the city. Our offices are well located, and expensively furnished.

We advertise in D-Magazine, newsletters, and Junior League Magazine. All hit the upper market. Our logos are used on all publications and printed matter, and are distinctive. Letterheads, business forms, etc., have been in a constant state of evolution over the period of 20 years. Signs are used on trucks that are identical to easels used on each job. These are excellent advertising tools at no constant expense.

I hope this gives you an insight into the inner workings of one Dallas landscape firm. Undoubtedly, these procedures are repeated by each of you, with variations, as no one does anything the same way.

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## COMPONENTS

Equipment for these systems consists of above-ground rotary sprinklers, quick-couplers, and quick-coupling valves. These components, together with a simple system of piping, comprise the cheapest watering system that can be installed.

**ABOVE-GROUND SPRINKLERS.** Most of these sprinklers are of the basic impact type with a swinging drive-arm. In one variation, the drive arm swings vertically instead of horizontally. Principle of operation is as described for impact drive, pop-up rotary sprinklers which are an adaptation of the above ground sprinkler.

**QUICK-COUPLING VALVES.** The valve is used to connect the above-ground rotary sprinkler to the water piping. These valves are installed flush with the turf, the same as sprinkler heads.

In the normal method of use, water pressure is maintained continuously at the Quick-Coupling Valve. Water pressure and a spring hold the valve closed when not in use.

**METHOD OF OPERATION.** The above-ground sprinkler is connected to a Coupler. The coupler is screwed into the valve, forcing the seat down and open. This allows water to flow through the coupler and sprinkler.

On smaller, more compact installations, it is customary to design the system so that sprinklers can be attached to successive quick-coupling valves for the sake of convenience. On larger projects, the system is usually planned for connecting sprinklers at alternate valves for each operation; or every third valve, or even alternate rows in some cases. Golf courses using the larger coverage diameter heads of 150 feet, 200 feet, or even more, commonly operate one sprinkler per fairway.

With operation as outlined in the preceding paragraph, the flow of water is quite well dispersed throughout the system. Spreading out the water load in this manner will permit reduction of pipe sizes, providing initial cost savings without affecting performance. However, some additional cost of moving sprinklers around will be incurred.

## EFFICIENCY

Although quick-coupling systems have the lowest initial cost, there are other cost factors that must be considered. Generally, sprinklers with larger diameters of coverage are used with these systems. Greater overlap must be provided, and the longer streams are more subject to wind drift. Both of these factors result in wasted water.

A second major factor in the decline in use of quick coupling systems is the high cost of hand labor. Labor to operate these systems is a continuous expense. Elimination of this expense is a primary reason for increased popularity of automatic rotary systems.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Watering is accomplished by individually plugging the sprinkler-coupler combination into the quick-coupling valve. Sprinklers are left in place until the desired amount of precipitation is attained, then the sprinklers are removed and coupled to another set of valves, usually adjacent to the area just watered. Sprinklers are moved about in this manner until all areas have been watered. Sprinkler rotation is slow enough to enable the operator to plug-in and remove sprinklers without getting wet.

The above-ground sprinklers are available with diameters of coverage similar to those of pop-up rotary sprinklers. In addition, a number of models have a significantly greater range of throw. Spacings must be derated to compensate for wind.

An exception to the above is golf course systems designed with a single row of very large coverage diameter sprinklers in the center of each fairway. In order to provide adequate mean coverage, golf sprinklers are spaced to throw head-to-head. A common design method is to space quick-coupling valves 85 to 100 feet and use sprinklers with a coverage radius of 90 to 110 feet.

## COST FACTORS

Total cost comparison of pop-up rotary vs. quick-coupling systems including (1) amortization of initial cost, (2) operation labor, (3) maintenance, and (4) water usage efficiency, consistently shows that the automatic pop-up rotary system is actually the least expensive over a period of years. **WTT**

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The expertise of the Board members is broad on purpose, the magazine covers a wide field of professions. Associations were contacted in the selection process for their recommendations. The final group gives the magazine a broad informational base and provides the reader with input rarely possible in trade publications.

These twelve dedicated individuals are glad to discuss the magazine at trade shows, regional conferences, or any industry gathering. We encourage you to discuss your ideas with them. They will pass your ideas on to us for action.

Certainly, any reader should still feel free to contact either Bruce Shank or Ron Morris (telephone 216-651-5500) any time with ideas for improving the magazine, news, or articles. Call person to person with a message and we'll call you back. The office address is 9800 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44102, if you prefer to put your ideas on paper. Don't forget the free comment card in this issue, either.

In order for you to get to know the magazine's Board, each member has written a "State of the Industry" message about their particular area. For the next few months these statements will be published. We welcome your response to their statements for the "Letters" section of the magazine, this column is a forum for industry discussion in an effort to help progress through communication.

## Rodney L. Bailey



Rod Bailey is president and general manager of Evergreen Services Corp., a division of SBG Inc., in Bellevue, Washington. SBG Inc. is a business counselling firm co-directed by Bailey and Thomas C. Graham.

Rod received his A.B. in economics from Stanford University in 1959 and entered the MBA program there to study small business and production management. Bailey has been an industrial engineer for Proctor & Gamble and a small business consultant for Harry J. Prior & Associates in Seattle. His major responsibilities were cost control, inventory control, planning, business organization, economic analysis, and site location. In 1971, he formed SBG Inc. in the Puget Sound area.

Bailey is a member of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America, the Professional Grounds Management Society, Washington State Nurserymen's Association, and the Community Associations Institute. He is past president of the