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Opportunities for attracting good foremen



Jerry Roche

JERRY ROCHE
Editor-in-Chief

No commute in southern California, you know, is a short commute.

Flagging down a Los Angeles-area taxi cab not long ago, I thus had the opportunity to engage the driver in a desultory but rather lengthy conversation.

He's 30 years old if he's a day, and a college graduate, I come to find. As a matter of fact, he's got his master's degree in business administration from a prestigious East Coast university whose name you'd recognize. The reluctant cabbie had moved to the West Coast months ago, seeking gainful employment in his area of specialization, eager to lend his services to the highest bidder.

Unfortunately, the highest bidder was the local cab company—a sad reflection on the tight job market in Los Angeles that also applies to the market in the green industry and other industries.

Just over the past few months, Americans have started to question the validity of some government statistics. Unemployment, President Clinton contends, is very low, and more Americans now hold jobs than ever before.

What the statistics *don't* say is that large corporations like AT&T are laying off skilled workers in droves, that callous major employers are behaving as if the country's human resources are mere pawns in a chess game where the prizes are increasing corporate profits and skyrocketing stock market prices.

Which, if the national news magazines are to be believed, is true. A recent edition of *Time* noted that the rich are getting richer, the poor are pretty much staying poor, and the middle class is edging ever so precipitously downward.

In a recent survey conducted by LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT, "finding middle managers" was one of the problems most cited by our readers. Might this be, then, an opportunity for green in-

dustry employers?

If there are truly uncounted, intelligent masses unable to find work in their area of expertise, might they be willing to settle for something less? A job, perhaps, that would be out from under the confining walls of their latest corporate experience, where they could take a deep breath and not gasp at recycled air? A job that offers opportunities to excel by innovation, to lead by example, to develop both mind and body equally?

No, the new level of employee wouldn't be making \$60,000 or \$70,000 a year. But with your understanding and assistance, they could make a good living and savor at least some of the benefits of their previous job.

And, yes, you would have to pay a premium for the educational level of this burgeoning workforce. But you might not have to break the bank.

Don't get me wrong here, readers. This is not a perfect fit by any means. But if the employment market continues to dictate further "downsizing," "out-sourcing" and other various fancy names for workforce cuts—and if you can offer the slightest incentive for coming to work in the green industry—you might be surprised at the kind of quality employees that are available.

Certainly, many of those middle managers laid off by our corporate giants might want to work for a smaller organization, where they are on a first-name basis with the top guy. Where they'll be fairly sure that their employer will remain loyal to them, as long as they meet their job-related responsibilities.

Just because they are beating the bushes for jobs, however, these exceptional people will not casually gravitate to the green industry without a proper introduction. You'll have to recruit, and you'll have to tell your story.

What can you do to attract this new generation of middle manager? Will a little extra incentive make a great difference in your profitability and/or efficiency?

Next time you're in a taxi cab, maybe you should ask. **LM**

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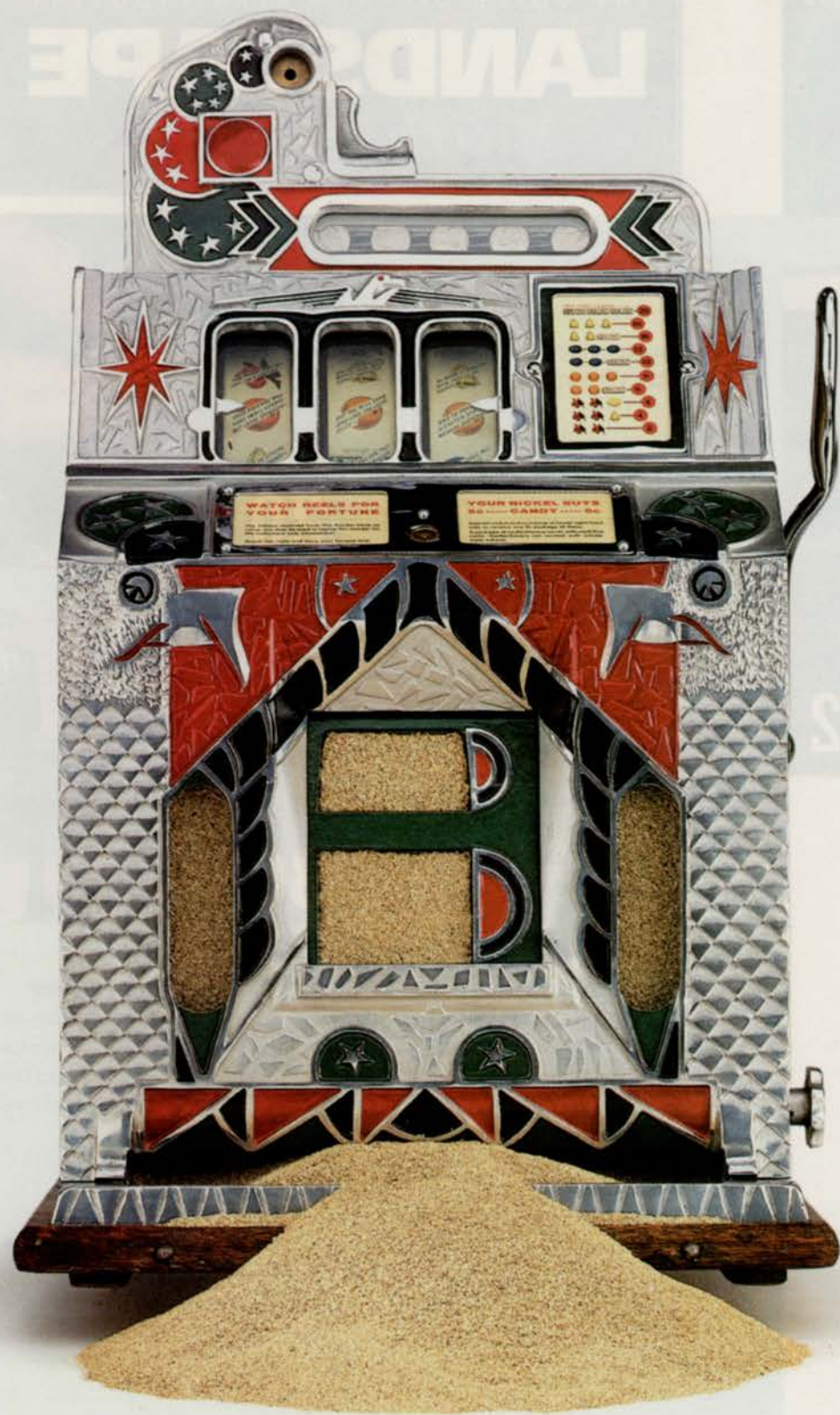
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INSIDE



THE VOICE OF THE GREEN INDUSTRY

LANDSCAPE *management*

FEATURES

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In the North, you should follow the clues to identify pests and use the process of elimination. In the South, you have to understand the weather's effects on pests to be able to control them.

PATRICIA J. VITTMUM, PH.D.
R.L. BRANDENBURG, PH.D.



28 PLANTS THAT SAY: 'KEEP OFF THE GRASS'

Strategically placed barrier plants look better than barbed wire. But there are tricks to choosing the right plant, and then making it work effectively. With a long list of good barrier plant selections.

RUSSELL BALGE, PH.D.



30 IN WASHINGTON: PESTICIDES ON THE SHELF

Our national government seems to be devoting almost all its energy to positioning for the 1996 Presidential election. That leaves little time to attend to issues that might affect the green industry. Nonetheless, here's what's going on in Washington, D.C., with a complete chart on pertinent proposals, and how they would affect your lawn care operation.

RON HALL

34 PLAN FOR TREE FAILURE

Even the mightiest oak's days are numbered. To benefit from a tree's 25- to 50-year lifespan, plant diverse species and reduce tree/turf conflicts.

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Tree pruning is one of the most labor-intensive green industry jobs. It's essential that your tools are lightweight and easy to use.

TERRY MCIVER

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The shocking truth

What kind of trees are more or less prone to lightning strikes? Are hemlocks often hit? If we have a group of large oak trees on a golf course, do we need to install lightning protection on every tree? Once installed, how many years is the tree protected?

—ILLINOIS

Lightning is most likely to strike the following trees:

- ▶ a lone tree
- ▶ the tallest tree of a group
- ▶ a tall tree at the edge of a grove or at the end of a row
- ▶ trees closer to a body of water such as a lake, pond, river or stream
- ▶ trees growing in moist soils

▶ trees close to a building

Deep-rooted trees appear to be more likely targets than shallow-rooted trees. Although not much research has been conducted, it is believed that trees such as ash, maple and oak—with their high starch contents—are better conductors than trees such as beech and birch, which contain a higher concentration of oils in their tissues.

The following trees have been reported to be hit by lightning more often than others: maple, ash, tulip tree, pine, spruce, sycamore, poplar, oak, hemlock and elm.

Trees such as chestnut, birch and beech are struck less often than average.

In a group of large trees—oaks in a grove, for example—generally only the taller trees need to be protected.

Lightning protection systems should be inspected during every dormant season. The air terminals may need to be raised every two to three years, or as needed. Make sure that a single, 32-strand copper (17 gauge) conductor is attached to an air terminal (tree point), installed in the highest part of a tree and then fastened along the trunk down to the ground connec-

In a group or grove of large trees, generally only the taller trees need to be protected.

tion. If the crown is round or globe-type, install several small air terminals and conductors in the highest parts of the main branches. Each conductor should be extended along the trunk, about one foot below the ground and out to the drip line of the tree or about 25 ft. from the trunk, whichever is farther.

Drenching for diseases

Can we mix Chipco 26019 to control Rhizoctonia sp. and either Subdue or Aliette to control Phytophthora sp.? We would like to drench trees with fungicides at the rootzone. The trees are growing in heavy clay covered with mulch.

—WASHINGTON

You can mix either Subdue or Aliette with Chipco 26019 for broad-spectrum disease man-

agement. Make sure that the *Rhizoctonia sp.* and *Phytophthora sp.* you mentioned are listed as disease-causing agents. Sometimes, it is possible to detect non-pathogenic forms of fungal agents which may not require a fungicide treatment. However, if you have a laboratory to diagnose the problem from a suspected tree, then it would be all right to use the fungicides. Otherwise, you will be using the fungicide for insurance's sake, not knowing whether or not the fungal species is a disease causing species.

If you are planning to use these fungicide combinations on a program basis, consider the following possible option:

First, use Chipco 26019 + Aliette fungicide in combination. A month later, use alternate combinations of Chipco 26019 + Subdue. Where feasible, it is advisable to provide a third treatment one month after the second treatment, using the Chipco 26019 + Aliette combination.

On the other hand, if you prefer, you can start with a Chipco 26019 + Subdue combination first, followed by Chipco 26019 + Aliette one month later, and again use Chipco 26019 + Subdue for the third treatment. With this program, your objective is to alternate the fungicides to obtain better results. **LM**



BALAKRISHNA RAO
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