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Did you see the photos from our visit to PLANET's Renewal & Remembrance program at Arlington National Cemetery?

We also tweeted photos and videos live from our visit to Bobcat in Fargo, ND.

Get the latest news and blogs by becoming a fan of the magazine on Facebook at: [Facebook.com/LandscapeManagement](https://www.facebook.com/LandscapeManagement). Catch breaking news or just some interesting facts about the Green Industry by following LM's tweets at: twitter.com/LandscapeMgmt.



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Landscape Management

OUR MISSION: *Landscape Management*—the leading information resource for lawn care, landscape maintenance, design/build and irrigation contractors—empowers Green Industry professionals to learn from their peers and our exclusive business intelligence from the *only* experienced editorial team in the market. Serving as the industry conscience for 50 years, we not only report on but also help shape news, views, trends and solutions.



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Investing in my future

Just got back from the bank, where I deposited a hefty sum of money into our checking account. No, it's not my paycheck for serving as editor of this fine publication. First, that's deposited directly into the account, where it lasts about as long as a politician's campaign promise after an election. And second, no one would use the term hefty to describe that amount.

No, the hefty sum is simply residing temporarily in our account before it's shipped off to Washington University in St. Louis to pay for the first semester of Josh's sophomore year (double majoring in economics and computer science, a minor in mathematics, and certification that he's fluent in Chinese — thanks for asking).

Josh, who happens to be interning at our company this year, was with me at the bank (he had his

own check to deposit) and smirked at my regular joke about paying for his college being an investment in my future.

According to the website babycenter.com, given our parameters (region in which we live, income, public vs. private college) the cost of raising Josh to the age of 18 is \$478,802. His 18th birthday is less than a month away, so I think we've pretty much neared that number.

Raising a child is an act of love, not a long-term financial investment. That said, I'm hoping Josh — and his younger sister — remember fondly all the trips, restaurants, video games and sporting events they attended on our dime (not to mention all the cheering and support for their activities).

The hope (returning to my regular joke) is that our investment will pay dividends when we're ready to retire (and maybe even a little sooner) when Josh is out in the workforce earning his own hefty paycheck. We repeat the joke, tongue firmly planted in cheek, mainly to remind him to not take for granted the gifts — both intellectual and financial — he has been given.

And maybe he'll treat his old man and mom to a cruise.

Investing in his future is like investing in your employees' future. You spend money on training and equipment in hopes they'll work more efficiently, which in turn earns you more revenue. OK, so the return on investment is a bit quicker than raising a child, but the principle is the same.

As parents we invest time, energy (a lot of energy) and money into our children in hopes they'll grow into responsible adults. As business owners you invest time, energy and money into your employees in hopes they'll become better, more productive workers.

And who knows, maybe one of those employees will buy you a cruise one day.

Josh and me shortly before he left for his freshman year.



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PROGRESS

Water wise



A flood of high-tech innovations propels irrigators to a new age.

In olden days, people could water to their heart's content without raising the ire of neighbors and city officials. With today's increasing water restrictions, that's not true anymore. Replacing the garden hose of yore are high-tech irrigation tools that are changing the shape of the irrigation industry and the way people water.

"When you're wasting water — watering when it's raining and those sorts of things, it's very visible," says Keith Shepersky, senior product and marketing manager for Irritrol, which in February released a wireless smart controller that adjusts water run times based on weather.

"Those things used to drive the Parks and Rec people crazy. They'd be saying, 'Why are you sprinkling when it's raining?'"

Fortunately for today's irrigators and water conservationists, we don't water when it's raining as much anymore. That's because irrigation is becoming easier to control remotely. Consumers and irrigation workers now can turn sprinklers on and off from the office or install sensors that trigger water only when it's needed.

It's a growing reality that seemed unfathomable in the recent past.

Smart controllers, as those in the industry know, once programmed can adjust water's run time to conform to a plant's daily water needs. Word of their usefulness is spreading. And it's not just the timers.

"Advances in communications technology now allow access to irriga-

tion systems remotely, from anywhere in the world," explains Jeff Kremicki, CID, CIC, Hunter Industries' product marketing manager, citing central control hardware and software that can be added to controllers.

"Today," he says, "a controller can be connected to a customer's computer via a network, Internet, or cellular connection, providing customers complete access to the irrigation scheduling" and alerting them to problems.

Ultimately, smart controllers save water.

"If you go back far enough, Shepersky says, "you see systems where somebody walks out the front door on their porch and reaches down and turns on a sprinkler valve manually.

"And the sprinklers would have multiple heads. And then the guy goes in to watch a ballgame and has no idea that 12-16 gallons a minute is flowing out on that circuit and it's been running across the yard for two hours."

Thanks to smart timers, such waste-fulness isn't as big an issue.

But they're not perfect, says Jeffrey Knight, central region education manager and instructor at Ewing Irrigation.

"Here comes the smart timer and the promises you put in the data and it will measure how much water is in the soil. But it's not that simple," he says.

"I have to give it the soil type. And then I give it the type of heads I'm using. I got to give it the precipitation rate so it knows how fast water's being applied... You have to give it the data and then watch it a couple weeks and

make adjustments. You can't just input the data and forget it."

If there's any flaw in irrigation's new technological products at all, agrees Adolfo Meza, product manager, contractor controllers, for Rain Bird, it's that people need to "use them appropriately to obtain the desired results; along with new technologies should come an understanding of these products and how to use them to gain the ultimate benefit."

Smart controllers aren't the only cutting edge irrigation technology on the market. There are also soil moisture sensors, more uniform nozzles and flow sensors. And those new products do more than conserve water, says Meza. They save customers and workers time and money.

Hunter's Kremicki says flow sensors are useful because they "monitor irrigation system flow and demands, providing the customer with feedback and protection to the site when irrigation system problems occur."

Ultimately, water-saving irrigation technology must and will continue to advance, Shepersky says. Because "we don't get more water than the Earth already has."



Smart controllers like Rain Bird's help conserve water and change the way people irrigate today.

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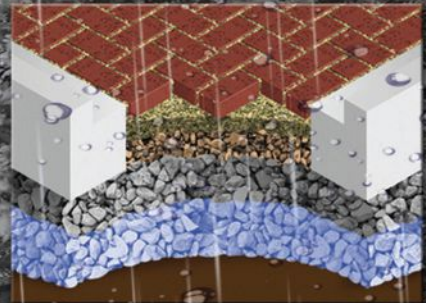
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A leader's winning ways

Winning is hard work, but well worth it, according to Pat Williams, senior vice president of the Orlando Magic.

Speaking to superintendents at the Golf Industry Show (GIS) in February in Orlando, FL, Williams said winning requires both great leadership and a significant investment of time, care and money to recruit, retain and fully develop a true team of all-stars.

"Who doesn't like to win?" Williams asked GIS attendees. "Winning is great fun. And it's contagious."

Equally attractive, Williams promised that once you've put in all that work to establish a winning culture, and you've become (or appointed or groomed) a great leader and assembled a great team, yesterday's work becomes today's fun.

Signed with the Philadelphia Phillies in 1962, Williams made the move from behind the plate (as a Minor League catcher) to the front office (as the Miami Marlins' business manager) in 1964. Spending the past half-century in professional

sports — including helping an NBA dream become a reality for Central Florida with his "Orlando Believes in Magic" campaign — Williams knows all about hard work, and great leaders and teams.

Williams is quick to point out that many of the "winning ways" he's learned came from the home court: He and his wife are the proud parents of 19 all-stars, including 14 adopted from four countries.

Williams' "7 traits of great leaders"

1. **Vision** — "Visionary leaders see before others, and they see more than others."
2. **Communication** — "You have to increase understanding to increase caring."
3. **People skills** — "Great leaders have a heart for people."
4. **Character** — "As retired U.S. Army General H.

Norman Schwarzkopf once said, 'Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without strategy.'

5. Competence — "Are great leaders born that way, or did they develop those skills? The answer is 'both.' ... And remember, you can't become a life-long teacher until you become a lifelong learner."

6. Boldness — "Great leaders have boldness, not ballness. They gather information, think things through from every angle, and when it's time to make decisions, they do so and then they move on."

7. Service — "Leadership is a form of service, which is a lost art to far too many today."

Williams' traits of great teams

Great leaders — "Great leaders view people as the bottom line, not as a tool to get to the bottom line."

Great talent — "You need to find people who are coachable and will help your team chemistry."

Great drive — "Welcome competition: It drags out of us that which we wouldn't do otherwise, but should be doing."

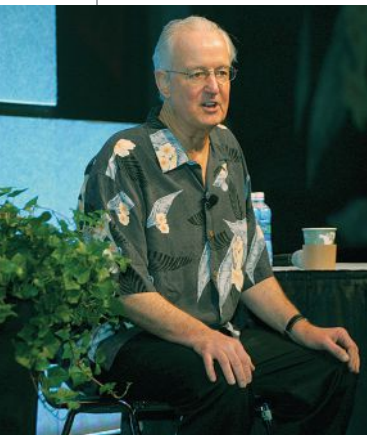
Great passion — "This passion is contagious and runs deep and far — it's never forgotten."

Great sportsmanship — "As Tommy Lasorda, 20-year manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers, has said, 'Remember, play for the name on the front of your jersey, not for the name on the back.'"

Great support — "As Chick-fil-A founder S. Truett Cathy once told me, 'You know how many people out there need encouragement? Everybody who's breathing — that's who.'"

Great respect — "When you treat everyone with respect, it leads to trust, which leads to loyalty, which leads to love, which leads to lifelong friendship."

Great character — "Honesty. Integrity. Responsibility: No finger pointing or selective amnesia. Hard working: all day, every day. Perseverance. Humble spirit. And, last but not least, courage: As John Wayne put so well, 'Courage is being scared to death, but saddling up anyway.'"



Pat Williams