



FATHER NATURE.

GENUS: POWER PLANT. IT ALL STARTS WITH THE LEGENDARY 5.7-LITER HEMI® V8 THAT PRODUCES 383 HORSEPOWER AND COMES WITH A BEST-IN-CLASS¹ STANDARD SINGLE 52-GALLON FUEL TANK FOR EXCELLENT DRIVING RANGE. NOT TO MENTION THE LARGEST BRAKE ROTORS AND PADS IN THE CLASS,¹ AND AVAILABLE INTEGRATED TRAILER BRAKE CONTROLLER. A TRAILER TOW RATING OF UP TO 18,750 POUNDS MEANS ALMOST NO JOB IS TOO BIG TO HANDLE. AND WHEN EQUIPPED WITH THE PROVEN 6.7L CUMMINS® TURBO DIESEL ENGINE, IT MEANS ONE LESS THING TO WORRY ABOUT. MOTHER NATURE DOESN'T COMPROMISE. AND NEITHER DO WE.



PROPERLY SECURE ALL CARGO.

RAM MEANS BUSINESS

RAM 3500/4500/5500 CHASSIS CABS

INCREASED FRONT GAWR UP TO 5500 LB
AND GVWR UP TO 13,000 LB (ON 3500)

AVAILABLE 6.7L CUMMINS TURBO DIESEL
WITH STANDARD DIESEL EXHAUST BRAKE

BEST-IN-CLASS STANDARD GVWR
FOR 5500 TRUCKS⁽¹⁾ (18,750-19,500 LB)


ALL-NEW CREW CAB DESIGN

BEST-IN-CLASS 5-YEAR/100,000-MILE
POWERTRAIN LIMITED WARRANTY⁽²⁾



RAM

RAMTRUCKS.COM/COMMERCIAL

BUSINESS 

DISCOVER SMALL-BUSINESS BENEFITS AND MORE AT RAMTRUCKS.COM/BUSINESSLINK.

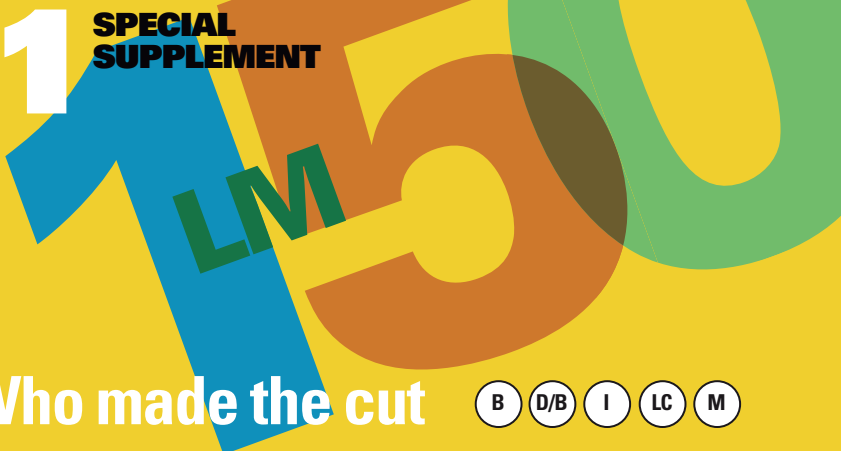
(1) CLASS 3-5 PICKUP-BASED CONVENTIONAL CAB CHASSIS.
(2) BASED ON FULL-LINE CLASS 3-5 CONVENTIONAL CAB
CHASSIS. RAM AND HEMI ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF
CHRYSLER GROUP LLC.

CONTENTS »

JUNE 2011
VOL 50, ISSUE 6

S1

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



Who made the cut

B **D/B** **I** **LC** **M**

LM unveils its exclusive list of the 150 largest landscape contractors in the country.

BY DAN JACOBS, BETH GERACI, CASEY PAYTON AND HEATHER GOOCH

FEATURES

26 Clean cut **B** **M**

Green Industry professionals are turning to propane equipment — and not looking back.
BY BRIAN RICHESSON

38 Project portfolio

The LaurelRock Co. creates an upstate New York oasis for busy Manhattanites.



41 The price is right **B** **D/B** **M**

A contractor uses innovative financing to land a project other companies might have had to take a pass on. BY CURT HARLER

LM MARKET MATCH We've made your life a little easier by supplying icons that direct you to stories targeting your core business.

B – Business, **D/B** – Design/Build, **I** – Irrigation, **LC** – Lawn Care, **M** – Maintenance

COLUMNS

8 Jacobs' Journal
BY DAN JACOBS

18 The Hall Mark
BY RON HALL

20 The Benchmark
BY KEVIN KEHOE

36 Best Practices
BY BRUCE WILSON

IN EVERY ISSUE

54 Classifieds **55 Resources**

DEPARTMENTS

10 News & Views

TOCA awards; re-energizing TruGreen; Everris rising

17 Progress

The industry's national organizations have evolved.
BY BETH GERACI

22 Lawn Care Pro

Brad Johnson, Tulsa, OK
BY RON HALL

24 Weed Watch

Goosegrass; spurge



33



33 LM Reports

Fungicides; turf seed and equipment; controllers and locators

40 Add-on Biz

Water features flow with Weilbacher Landscaping's other services.
BY CASEY PAYTON



52 A Cut Above

Ruppert Landscape, Laytonsville, MD
BY BETH GERACI

56 My Biggest Mistake

Shedding the nursery allowed Stephen Hillenmeyer to specialize.
BY CASEY PAYTON



THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A BUSINESS OWNER?

We can help.
We start with you. We stay with you.

Our Franchise Support Team has over 260 years of combined commercial landscape industry experience to assist you with business and industry knowledge.



It's
MUCH MORE
than cutting grass.

INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE

BECOME A
FRANCHISE OWNER WITH
U.S. LAWNS

**YOUR
SUCCESS**
is everything to
US



NATIONAL STRENGTH
LOCAL COMMITMENT

1-866-781-4875
franchise@uslawns.net
www.uslawns.com/franchise

ONLINE NOW

» WWW.LANDSCAPEMANAGEMENT.NET

THE SOCIAL SIDE

Get the latest news and blogs by becoming a fan of the magazine on Facebook at: [facebook.com/LandscapeManagement](https://www.facebook.com/LandscapeManagement).



Or you can follow LM's tweets at: twitter.com/LandscapeMgmt.

WEB EXCLUSIVE

San Diego-based Benchmark Landscape was awarded a \$3 million contract to install new landscaping at the Palomar Hospital in Escondido, CA. It's an ambitious — and sustainable — project.



DIGITAL VAULT

Select stories from our e-newsletters. Visit www.landscapemanagement.net/newsletters to sign up or view.

LMdirect!

Several Canadian provinces have banned the sale and use of most traditional lawn care pest control products. But that's not stopping Canadians from crossing into the U.S. to purchase weed killers and insecticides.

Athletic Turf News

See why Jessica Alba, the starlets at the Playboy Man-

sion and other Hollywood high-rollers are turning to synthetic turf for their landscape needs.

LD/B Solutions

A 1937 hillside home in the Los Angeles foothills gets a major facelift. What does the unique Spanish Revival abode look like now?

i-News

Urban landscapes can be as ecologically beneficial as they are beautiful, says Jeffrey Bruce, FASLA, GRP. Hear what needs to be done to make it happen.

THE LM DAILY

You can buy a 5-lb. bag of one grass seed mixture for about \$35. That's expensive grass seed. Is it worth it?



ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTO BY: ISTOCK INTERNATIONAL INC.

Clients itching to go indoors? MistAway systems help them solve their mosquito problems today.




We are actively seeking Landscaping Professionals to sell, install and service our innovative outdoor misting systems that effectively control mosquitoes and other annoying insects.

Great margins and recurring revenues!

1-866-485-7255
WWW.MISTAWAY.COM

BECOME A MISTAWAY DEALER TODAY!



Onetime[®] HERBICIDE

You have enough things to worry about. But with **Onetime[®] herbicide**, wasting time tank-mixing isn't one of them. **Onetime** combines our new patented formulation of quinclorac, MCPP-P and dicamba, enabling you to control more than 70 weeds, including crabgrass, clover and dandelion *without* tank-mixing. Plus, its liquid formulation, which includes the same active ingredient as in **Drive[®] XLR8 herbicide**, provides more rapid absorption into the plant in both warm- and cool-season turf. If you've got weeds, it's time for **Onetime**.

betterturf.basf.us

 **BASF**

The Chemical Company



**Plant
protection
guaranteed
or your money back**

**Plant
protection
guaranteed
or your money back**

Plantskydd®

REPELLENT

DEER • RABBITS • VOLES

NEW!
Plantskydd®
Granular

**Rabbits, Voles and
Small Critter Repellent**

Sprinkle *Plantskydd*
throughout your garden.
It couldn't be easier!
Available as 1 lb., 3 lb.,
7 lb., and 20 lb.

#1 Most Effective
#1 Longest Lasting
#1 Most Tested

ORGANIC
Production

Plantskydd®
Deer Repellent

Repels deer, elk, and rabbits.
Available as Ready-to-Use
Spray (1 qt.) or Jug (1.32 gal)
and Soluble Powder
Concentrate (1 lb., 2.2 lb.
and 22 lb.).



For our **DEALER LOCATOR**, FAQs, testimonials and
*independent research results, visit our website: www.plantskydd.com

CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-252-6051 info@treeworld.com

Landscape Management

CLEVELAND HEADQUARTERS
600 SUPERIOR AVE. EAST SUITE 1100
CLEVELAND OH 44114 800/669-1668

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editorial Director Marty Whitford 216/706-3766 |
mwhitford@questex.com

Editor-in-Chief Daniel G. Jacobs 216/706-3754 |
djacobs@questex.com

Editor-at-Large Ron Hall 216/706-3739 | rhall@questex.com

Senior Editor Beth Geraci 216/706-3756 |
bgeraci@questex.com

Contributing Editors Heather & Jamie Gooch 330/723-3539 |
heather@goochandgooch.com, jamie@goochandgooch.com

Art Director Carrie Parkhill 216/706-3780 |
cparkhill@questex.com

ADVERTISING STAFF

Publisher Patrick Roberts
216/706-3736 Fax: 216/706-3712 | proberts@questex.com

Northern National Sales Manager Dave Huisman
732/493-4951 Fax: 732/493-4951 | dhuisman@questex.com

Southern National Sales Manager Jason DeSarle
216/706-3758 Fax: 216/706-3712 | jdesarle@questex.com

Business Development Manager Ric Abernethy
216/706-3723 Fax: 216/706-3712 | rabernethy@questex.com

Account Executive Classifieds Kelli Velasquez
216/706-3767 Fax: 216/706-3712 | kvelasquez@questex.com

BUSINESS STAFF

Vice President Kevin Stoltman 216/706-3740 |
kstoltman@questex.com

Administrative Coordinator Petra Turko 216/706-3768 |
pturko@questex.com

Production Manager Amber Terch 218/206-2129 |
Amber.terch@superiormediasolutions.net

Production Director Jamie Kleist 218/206-2107 |
Jamie.kleist@superiormediasolutions.net

Audience Development Manager Carol Hatcher
216/706-3785 | chatcher@questex.com

MARKETING/MAGAZINE SERVICES

Reprints landscapemanagement@theygsgroup.com |
800/290-5460 x100

Ilene Schwartz Circulation List Rental 216/371-1667

Customer Services Subscriber/Customer Service
landscapemanagement@halldata.com |
866/344-1315; 847/763-9594 if outside the U.S.

Paul Semple International Licensing
714/513-8614 Fax: 714/513-8845 | psemple@questex.com

For current single copy, back issues, or CD-ROM,
call 866/344-1315; 847/763-9594 if outside the U.S.

QUESTEX MEDIA CORPORATE OFFICERS

President & Chief Executive Officer Kerry C. Gumas
Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer Tom Caridi
Executive Vice President Antony D'Avino
Executive Vice President Gideon Dean

EarthWay

SPRAY-PRO

**S25 Ground Driven
Push Sprayer**

See the S25 demo videos
at www.earthway.com

Features include:

- 6.6 Gallon tank with inlet filter
- 13" Pneumatic stud type tires
- Epoxy powder coated heavy duty "diamond" chassis
- High-speed ground driven pump
- Application volumes of 1+ gallon/1,000 sq. ft.
- Adjustable spray width and 3 spray tips

For information, call 1-800-294-0671 or visit
www.earthway.com to find a dealer.



GXV690

Zero Turns, Zero Headaches.

Commercial crews know how to run the wheels off a mower. When it comes to that kind of wear and tear, some engines just don't cut it. The new, exceptionally quiet, lightweight and low-vibration Honda GX V-Twin engines deliver the power, durability and fuel efficiency that commercial crews need to work quickly and cost effectively. And a 3-Year Warranty* proves that when we say our engines are reliable, that's a claim we stand behind. So if you're looking for an engine that works as hard and long as the people it's made for, stop spinning your wheels. Log on to engines.honda.com and find out how you can put our engines to work for you.



GX35



GX100



GX200



iGX340

HONDA
ENGINES

Built like no other.



*Warranty applies to all Honda GX Series Engines, 100cc or larger purchased at retail or put into rental service since January 1, 2009. Warranty excludes the Honda GXV160 model. See full warranty details at Honda.com. For optimum performance and safety, please read the owner's manual before operating your Honda Power Equipment. ©2011 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.





Lessons learned the hard way

The hardest story I ever had to write came early in my journalism career. Actually, it came before my professional career officially started. I was still studying at the University of Cincinnati that Sunday when I walked into the school's newsroom. As the news editor it was part of my job to check with the campus information office to review the previous day's events.

That's when I came across the campus police report.

Sometime in the wee hours of the morning after a long night of partying, a student visiting from another school woke in the middle of the night, and perhaps confused and unsure of where he was, tumbled from the dorm room window. He crashed through an iron gate to the cement loading dock 11 floors below. The police report indicated his friends identified him by his clothing; he'd suffered too much "facial trauma" to be identified any other way.

It was a difficult story to write for many reasons, not the least of which were the sad nature of the events and the anger and disdain directed at me after the article appeared in print.

That was the day I became a journalist. I learned more about being a writer from that and my subsequent time at the paper than I did in any of my classes. Sure, I learned theory and style in the classroom, but my real teachers were my fellow editors and daily experiences in the

newsroom and around campus.

I suspect much of what you know about business comes from the challenges you face running your company. Maybe you took some classes on your way to a degree, but it wasn't until you started running your own company that the real lessons kicked in.

Little did we know the downturn and recession we've suffered the past few years would send us all back to school — and what a harsh headmistress. Consider it a master's class in business practice.

The recession might have officially ended, but with the housing market (mostly) still suffering, it looks like a long slow haul before we return to more solid footing.

If this is your first recession you're learning the lessons and strategies that will make your company stronger, leaner and more profitable, strategies that will serve you well when prices stabilize and customers start spending again.

We share some of those lessons as part of *LM's* annual Top 150 coverage. It seems some of the biggest companies in the industry are getting some of their mojo back. Not everyone grew, but a significant number did. We talk to them about the lessons they learned during the recession, how this downturn compared with others and how their businesses are forever changed because of it.

Our Top 150 coverage also includes a look at the up and comers — the young guns just off the Top 150 list (and maybe a couple who just found their way on) to find out how they fared against the biggest in the industry.

There's also a story about the fastest growing companies. When the economy is in turmoil there's always a shakeout — winners and losers. Even in a recession several companies grew at double-digit rates.

Finally there are the lists. In addition to a listing of the largest Green Industry enterprises, we'll show you who does the most business in your region of the country. It all begins on page S1.

It seems **some of the biggest companies in the industry** are getting some of their mojo back.



GET FASTER SEDGE RESULTS

STOP FUTURE POPULATIONS

Nothing puts you in control of sedges like Dismiss® herbicides.

Professionals across the country who selected Dismiss® herbicides for their sedge control last year have been amazed by the fast visible results they achieved. But they're also experiencing an exciting and unexpected difference this season: a significant reduction in new sedge populations.

That's because Dismiss fights yellow nutsedge, green kyllinga and purple nutsedge underground, impacting the weeds' reproductive structures to help reduce future generations of sedges from appearing. With Dismiss, you're getting the industry's fastest visible results PLUS a noticeable reduction of sedges next season, saving you time and money. To find out which Dismiss formulation is right for your turf, visit www.fmcprosolutions.com or contact your FMC Market Specialist or local FMC Distributor.



Scan this tag with the Microsoft Tag Reader app on your smartphone to view an exciting video on Dismiss herbicides.

Need the mobile app? Get it free at <http://gettag.mobi>

FMC

FMC Professional Solutions

1-800-321-1FMC • fmcprosolutions.com


Dismiss
TURF HERBICIDE


Dismiss CA
HERBICIDE


Dismiss
South
HERBICIDE

NEWS+VIEWS

GREEN INDUSTRY EVENTS, TRENDS AND TIPS

WINNING WAYS

Landscape Management and *Golfdom*'s continued commitment to delivering quality products results in 21 TOCA awards.

Questex Media Group is pleased to announce its brands *Landscape Management* and *Golfdom* together earned 21 awards at the annual Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association (TOCA) awards ceremony. The ceremony took place in May in Asheville, NC.

Landscape Management reaped 13 honors, while *Golfdom* brought home eight awards. The magazines earned

accolades for writing, new media, special projects and graphic design.

"I'm proud to be part of a team that has garnered 37 TOCA awards in the last three years and 26 more than our closest competitor (TLC)," said Patrick Roberts, publisher of *Landscape Management* and *Golfdom*. "We place a high value on TOCA as an association and always appreciate being recognized by such an influential group of professionals."

Landscape Management team members won honors for cover page design ("The Innovation Lab"); writing (Nicole Wisniewski's feature "Oil & Water"); special projects ("The Industry Pulse Report"); and social media (the *LM* blog).

The magazines' staff members also were honored with nine merit awards. Among the recipients were newly promoted *Landscape Management* editor Dan Jacobs for his "A Cut Above" series; Ron Hall for his "Water Wise" series; Hall, Wisniewski and Jacobs for their story "The Big Give"; Wisniewski for innovative use of social media; and Hall for his editorial "Victims of our own promises?"

Golfdom earned six first-place awards, including one for feature writing ("Giving Thanks"); Web writing ("A Golf Course Uplifts a Community"); writing for commercial publications ("Plant Health Report" and "Water Wise"); and headline writing ("I'll Take a...Mulligan"). *Golfdom* also won first place for portrait photography with the June 2010 cover photo of Chris Dalhamer.

Golfdom also won two merit awards. "The Best of Both Worlds" won for environmental stewardship article, and the 2010 Annual Putting Surface Guide for special projects. *Golfdom* editor Seth Jones won merits for his work last year at *Golf Course Management* magazine, for his operations profile of Whistling Straits and his cover story on Nick Price.



PHOTO BY BETH GERACI