

Ruppert buys N.C. firm

Ruppert Landscape Inc., Laytonsville, Md., has acquired New River Landscape, a Raleigh, N.C.-based company that provides commercial grounds management services.

In the transaction, Ruppert acquired commercial landscape management contracts as well as trucks, equipment and several employees.



New River Landscape has operated in the Raleigh metropolitan area for three years. Founder David Blakely will continue to run a related business he owns that services Charlotte and other markets. New River

Landscape's former minority owner Jeff Sosa, who has been responsible for the day-to-day operations of the company's Raleigh operations, will stay on with Ruppert in a management capacity.

Ruppert also acquired Raleigh area company Eco Scapes in June. "These additions were part of a targeted plan to grow our business in this very vibrant market," said Ruppert President Chris Davitt. "New River Landscape represents a key piece of this plan as they brought to the table a very prestigious list of customers in the Raleigh area."

Frank, Lied's partner on residential maintenance

Germantown, Wis.-based David J. Frank Landscape Contracting acquired Lied's Nursery Co. to form a residential landscape division. The new entity will operate as Lied's-Frank Residential Landscapes, a division of David J. Frank Landscape Contracting. Terms of the agreement weren't disclosed.

Tom Lied will be president of the new division. Thirty of Lied's staff members will join the company, bringing it to more than 300 employees. David J. Frank ranked No. 73 on the 2012 *LM* 150 with \$17.8 million in 2011 revenue.

Lied's, formerly based in Sussex, Wis., closed its retail garden center in 2010. In July two of four Lied's properties were foreclosed, according to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

"We are both family-owned businesses, and we have families who have worked together for generations," Frank says. "We love that we have passionate fathers and sons working alongside one another, and their commitment to their work is incredible."

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1962/2012

Since *Landscape Management* launched in 1962 as *Weeds and Turf*, the Green Industry has experienced great growth. The coverage that unfolds in our anniversary edition celebrates that success.

P14 In honor of 50 years we look at 50 industry influencers: the people, companies, products and technology that have changed the way the industry does business. **P30** We share *LM*'s editorial and design evolution. **P32** We show how three Green Industry organizations celebrating their own golden anniversaries have survived and thrived, too. **P36** Finally, we detail industry suppliers' milestones.

Thanks for celebrating with us.

5-0h!

The big

Here's our list (in no particular order) of 50 people, issues, organizations and technologies that have influenced the Green Industry over the last five decades.

By Marisa Palmieri & Beth Geraci

1 American Nursery & Landscape Association — Though it was founded 86 years before *LM*, ANLA has made quite an impact in the last five decades it's been around. With a member mix that includes landscape design and installation firms, in addition to plant growers, distributors and retailers, the Washington, D.C.-based association has led the way on many legislative fronts, including immigration reform, guest worker program initiatives, water issues and others. It's also provided public relations, research and education at events such as its well-known Management Clinic (which now has a new name and format).



Perhaps one of ANLA's greatest influences was the establishment 50 years ago of its research arm, the Horticultural Research Institute, which has directed more than \$5.4 million of industry funds through its competitive grants program. Research projects have covered the full range of production, environmental and business issues important to the Green Industry. For example, two current projects cover research on boxwood blight and biodegradable containers.

With ANLA's recent announcement that it will be forming a new, yet-to-be-named association with OFA The Association of Horticulture Professionals, following several months of working together in a joint venture, one can only hope the best is yet to come.

2 Irrigation Association — Launched in 1949, the Falls Church, Va.-based IA promotes efficient irrigation and water conservation, striving to ensure water will be available for generations to come. Today, more than 2,000 irrigation pros belong to the IA. Throughout the years, the association has provided continuing education, advocacy and professional certifications, and influenced legislation, best practices and standards.

3 Do Not Call list — During the growth decades of the lawn care industry, one way to gain new customers in a business where volume and density rule was through telemarketing. According to a 2002 survey conducted by the Professional Lawn Care Applicators of America (now part of PLANET), 55 percent of members had used telemarketing to sell to current and potential customers, with 20 percent using it as its main marketing method. That came to a halt in 2003, when Congress passed legislation enacting the federal Do Not Call registry, eliminating one of the lawn care industry's most effective marketing methods.



4 Suburban development — With the rise of suburbia in the mid-20th Century, aided by the increase in car ownership and the construction of the highway system, came common-interest developments, a category of housing that includes developments of single-family homes, condominiums and apartments. This type of housing—and the homeowner associations (HOAs) that came with it—has exploded over the last five decades. Though homeowners often criticize HOAs for their restrictive rules, the advent of HOAs has created a market segment for Green Industry services that didn't exist before.

According to the Community Associations Institute, in 1970 there were about 10,000 communities with HOAs, accounting for 701,000 housing units and 2.1 million residents. By 2011 there were 314,200 such communities with 25.1 million housing units and 62.3 million residents.

5 Pesticide and fertilizer restrictions —

In 1991, Hudson, Quebec, became the first North American municipality to ban lawn care pesticides. Despite a 1987 ruling that said two state statutes preempted the Village of Wauconda, Ill.'s right to pass rules governing lawn care, it launched concern among U.S. lawn care professionals that soon they would have a patchwork of local restrictions to comply with, making their jobs much more difficult. The lawn care industry began supporting state pesticide preemption laws to make it illegal for cities to pass laws more restrictive than the state's (the Supreme Court ruled in 1991 that federal law doesn't preempt local jurisdictions from restricting the use of pesticides). Today, only nine states and Washington, D.C., don't have a pesticide preemption law, and there are seven province-wide bans on the sale and use of "cosmetic" pesticides in Canada.



6 Stand-on, ride-on sprayers/spreaders — The early lawn care operators (LCOs) could only dream of the high-end fertilizer- and pesticide-application equipment on the market today. Post-World War II equipment, much of it derived from the

ag sector, included push drop spreaders and rotary spreaders. Next, motorized walk-behind machines hit the market, followed by stand-on, ride-on units by the late 1990s. Today, these machines are outfitted with luxuries such as ergonomic handlebars, fingertip controls, speedometers, pressure gauges and more, improving productivity well beyond an early LCO's imagination.

"Chemical equipment companies have given us the tools to do our jobs more efficiently, reducing costs and making it easier to accomplish our goals."

**SURVEY
SAYS...**

7 Outdoor Power Equipment Institute — The OPEI's history goes back 60 years to 1952, when 11 mower manufacturers chartered The Lawn Mower Institute to focus on safety promotion and to work together on government issues. It adopted its current name in 1960 with a membership that includes engine manufacturers. In 1993 the membership expanded to include makers of portable power equipment. In addition to launching the industry's first national trade show, the International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment Exposition in 1984 (now part of GIE+Expo, which takes place annually in Louisville, Ky.), OPEI's achievements include creating a safety seal and approving independent third-party voluntary testing for mowers. Today the association focuses on advocacy for issues such as fuel, water and regulations, ensuring lawmakers hear the voice of Green Industry equipment manufacturers when they're creating public policy. It also promotes environmental appreciation and the value of green spaces through its TurfMutt educational program, in partnership with Discovery Education.

**SURVEY
SAYS...**

We polled our readers online in July to get their feedback on the people, technology, organizations and techniques they say have had the greatest impact on the Green Industry over the last 50 years. The survey netted 78 responses and the insightful quotes you see marked with this icon throughout this story.

8 Two-way radios — Some landscape contractors and lawn care operators remember a time when they stopped at pay phones to check in with the shop. That subsided in the late 1970s, when the Federal Communications Commission began to license business and commercial 800 MHz two-way radio systems. Soon after, walkie talkies were the norm—and by the 1990s and early 2000s Nextel handheld units and their push-to-talk feature and associated “chirp” were ubiquitous. By the mid-2000s, cell phones had prevailed and carrying two devices became cumbersome, rendering two-way radios obsolete.



9 National Turfgrass Evaluation Program — Founded in 1981, the NTEP turf research program has expanded to the evaluation of 17 turfgrass species in 40 U.S. states and six Canadian provinces. Each year NTEP collects and summarizes information such as turfgrass quality, color, density, resistance to pests, tolerance to temperature, drought and traffic. The data are used by plant breeders, turfgrass researchers, extension personnel, growers and consumers to identify suitable types of seed or sod.

10 GPS — GPS technology, originally developed in 1973 by the U.S. Department of Defense, became operational in 1994. Within a decade, businesses with mobile fleets, such as those in the Green Industry, began adopting the technology for improved routing, job tracking and employee accountability.

11 Business software — Landscape companies lucky enough to be operating in the latter part of the 20th Century and beyond reaped the benefits of advancements in business software, which eliminates tedious accounting tasks (general ledger, payroll and taxes, anyone?). Office suites such as Microsoft Office—or today’s web-based alternatives—have increased productivity tremendously. Landscape industry-specific software programs include design software, property-measuring tools, and overall management programs that handle billing, routing, scheduling and more.

“Financial, estimating, pricing and tracking computer programs have improved so much to allow us as owners to truly know how we’re doing on a monthly basis instead of a ‘feel’ basis or typical year-end basis.”



12 Certification — Over the last two decades, Green Industry professionals have had the opportunity to become voluntarily certified by trade associations. The goal of the programs is to raise the level of technical expertise and professionalism and gain traction among consumers.

On a national level, PLANET administers the Landscape Industry Certified program. The idea was first raised in the late 1980s and gained momentum in the 1990s under ALCA President Bob Maronde. The association retained a Texas A&M professor to help develop a test for the Certified Landscape Professional and formed a board of governors comprising all past presidents and Gary Thornton to oversee the project. By 1993, there were 24 CLPs. Today there are more than 5,000 people with Landscape Industry Certified designations worldwide. The California Landscape Contractors Association held the first Certified Landscape Technician exam in 1983. Certification sprung up as a result of the inability to get an apprenticeship program off the ground. Eleven years later ALCA purchased the rights to the exam and began to offer it to state

13 Emissions/noise regulations — Since the mid-1970s, communities have sought to ban—and sometimes succeeded in banning—the use of gas-powered leaf blowers. Hundreds of communities across the country have blower bans or restrictions on the books. As landscape contractors who operate in these areas say, these rules wreak havoc on efficiency (it takes about 40 percent more time to clean up debris with rakes and brooms versus blowers)—and profits. Some ordinances are outright restrictions; others incorporate operator training, time-of-use restrictions and buy-backs of older equipment, promoting new, lower-noise units. Noise pollution is typically the primary argument, but environmental health and emissions often creep into the debate, despite blower manufacturers’ dramatic reductions in noise and emissions levels.



associations for their members.

In 2001 the Snow & Ice Managers Association initiated the Certified Snow Professional program (see No. 20).

The IA certifies professionals in six categories.



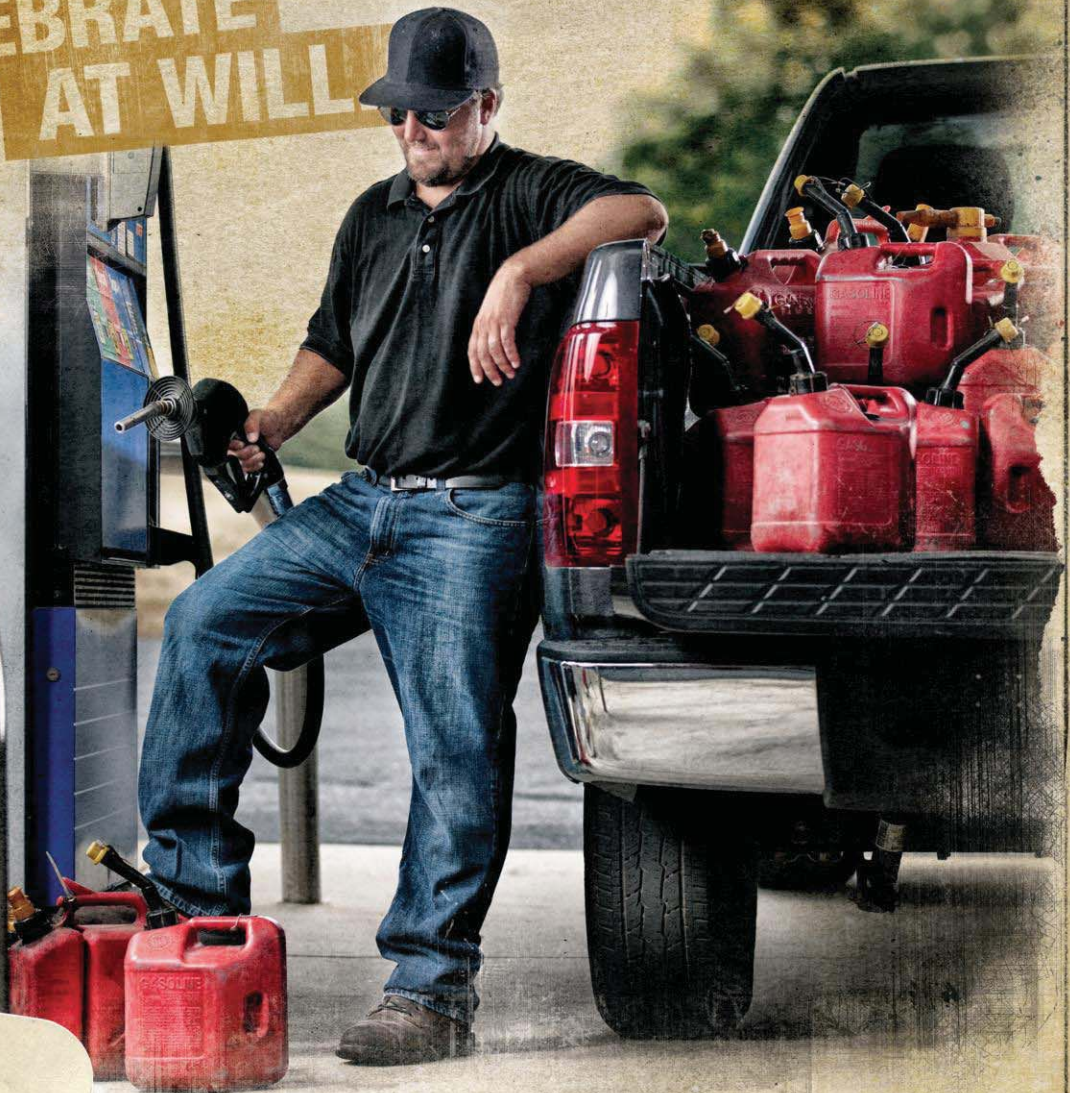
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14 Integrated Pest Management — Tracing its roots to the post-World War II era, when many pesticides were available and resistance was rearing its head, entomologists began practicing “integrated control” in agriculture, using a mix of chemical controls and biological controls. IPM became a national policy in 1972 when President Richard Nixon asked federal agencies to apply the concept of IPM. In 1979 President Jimmy Carter established an IPM Coordinating Committee and mentioned it in his environmental message. Over the last three decades, familiarity with and practice of IPM has become the norm among all good Green Industry pros.

15 Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment — The manufacturers and suppliers of specialty pesticides and fertilizers formed RISE in 1991 to advocate for the industry at a time when lawn care was under intense scrutiny by environmentalists and lawmakers (consider the Congressional hearings on lawn care and pesticide use in the early 1990s). The Washington, D.C.-based association monitors legislative and regulatory issues in the nation’s capital and in the states. In recent years, it has focused on grassroots advocacy at the local level.

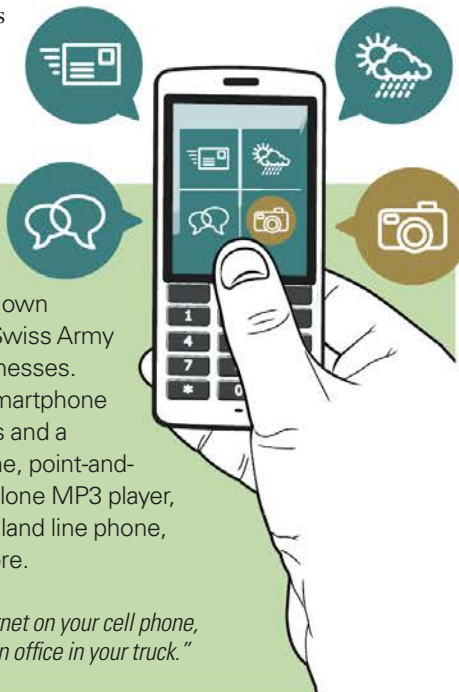
16 Smartphones — Half of U.S. mobile phone subscribers now own smartphones, proving these digital Swiss Army Knives are must-have items for businesses. Consider the number of devices a smartphone can replace for a few hundred dollars and a service contract: traditional cell phone, point-and-shoot camera, video camera, standalone MP3 player, GPS device, personal planner, radio, land line phone, home Internet service and many more.



“With the Internet on your cell phone, you can have an office in your truck.”

17 Water restrictions — As the demands on water resources have increased over the last five decades and drought cycles rear their heads, state and local government have enacted outdoor water use restrictions to limit lawn irrigating, car washing, pool filling and other activities deemed “nonessential.” The bans (which can take the form of completely shutting off the taps, instituting odd/even water days or restrictions on the time of day) often backfire, spurring increased consumption.

Recently, the Green Industry, in this case led by the IA, has hit its stride in promoting preventive water-saving measures rather than reacting once crises hit. In 2005 it launched Smart Irrigation Month in July, the month where irrigation demand typically reaches its peak. The campaign is designed to improve consumer awareness about smart irrigation techniques, encourage industry members to adopt and promote smart irrigation practices and technologies and help water providers minimize peak water use.



Alex Shigo (right) explaining markings on an oak section.

18 Alex Shigo, Ph.D. — Shigo, also known as the “father of modern arboriculture,” uncovered how trees process decay when he worked for the U.S. Forest Service in the 1960s and 1970s. When one-man chainsaws hit the market and he was able to cut trees longitudinally, he discovered trees’ ability to wall off decaying tissue, which he called “compartmentalization.” This information changed the way arborists assess and prune trees. After Shigo retired in 1985, he wrote and lectured, spreading his knowledge and mentoring tree care professionals around the world.



“His way of pruning was revolutionary.”

19 American Society of Landscape Architects — Dating back to 1899, the ASLA strives to “increase the public’s awareness of and appreciation for the profession of landscape architecture and its contributions to quality of life.” With more than 17,000 members and 48 chapters, its efforts over the last five decades have no doubt trickled down to benefit professionals that provide commercial and residential landscape maintenance, design/build, lawn care and irrigation services.

Recently, ASLA spearheaded the Sustainable Sites Initiative, which was conceived in 2005 to promote sustainable land development and management practices that can apply to sites with and without buildings. The U.S. Green Building Council, a stakeholder in the initiative, anticipates incorporating these guidelines and performance benchmarks into future iterations of the LEED Green Building Rating System.

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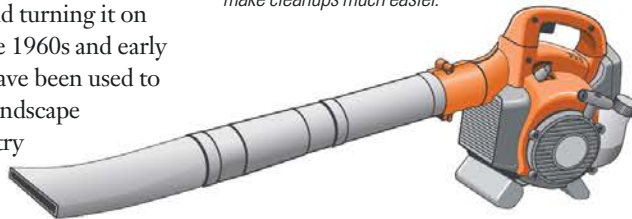
20 Snow & Ice Management Association — SIMA was formed by eight contractors in 1996 to foster a professional image of the snow and ice removal industry. It held its first Snow & Ice Symposium in 1998. It also founded a certification program in 2001 that has grown to include nearly 200 Certified Snow Professionals. Over the last 16 years it has grown to 1,600 members and has improved contractors' access to training and best practices information.

21 Leaf blowers — Since consumers and landscapers began dismantling a blowing device used to apply pesticides and turning it on their leaves in the late 1960s and early 1970s, leaf blowers have been used to efficiently clean up landscape debris. (Green Industry studies estimate

blowers take one-fifth the amount of time to clean up debris than the hand tools they replaced.) After seeing the demand, handheld equipment manufacturers responded with units specifically for this purpose and have been adapting and improving them ever since with different options: handheld or backpack; two-stroke or four-stroke engines; gas-, electric- or battery-powered. Despite the gripes of some environmentalists and neighbors, today's blowers are cleaner and quieter than their predecessors, and getting better all the time.



"Blowers are the most important tool on the truck, whether you're mowing, trimming or doing tree work. They make cleanups much easier."



22 HGTV — At the end of 1994, as the E.W. Scripps Co. was shifting its focus from newspapers to television, it launched Home & Garden Television (HGTV), the first cable station dedicated to gardening, landscaping, home decorating and home maintenance. Five years later, HGTV was available in 48.4 million homes. Now it reaches 99 million. HGTV showed homeowners the possibilities, made landscaping trendy and set the stage for the many home improvement channels that followed.

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