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5 Ways the Walker Mower Makes Lawn Care

EASY



MOWING

- Highly responsive **precision steering and handling**
- Designed to enhance ergonomics and **operator comfort**
- Well-balanced weight distribution for greater **hillside stability**
- Out-front deck allowing for better **trimming capability**



Presiding is easy with a precision steering and handling system. The out-front deck allows for better trimming capability. Park Point, Michigan, Greenhouse, Metairie, Ontario, Canada.



WATCH THE VIDEO ▶



YEAR-ROUND PRODUCTIVITY

- Mulching and collection **deck options** make quick work of **leaf cleanup**
- Decks can be swapped out for a **snowblower** for powerful snow removal
- **Dozer blades** allow for quick sidewalk or driveway snow removal
- The **Dethatcher** attachment is an easy solution for removing thatch from lawns



The Walker mower that does it all. It gets you out there with a snowblower, the out-front deck for leaf cleanup, and the dozer blade for quick sidewalk or driveway snow removal. Ohio County, Ontario, Canada, Idaho Falls, Idaho.



◀ WATCH THE VIDEO



BEAUTIFUL CUT

- The **front-mount deck** of the Walker reduces impact on the turf prior to cutting
- **Lower overall mower weight** improves agility and reduces rutting
- **Internal Grass Handling System** vacuums grass clippings, leaves, or debris
- Grass is lifted, cut, and processed evenly to produce natural **stripping**



The Walker mower that does it all. It gets you out there with a snowblower, the out-front deck for leaf cleanup, and the dozer blade for quick sidewalk or driveway snow removal. Ohio County, Ontario, Canada, Idaho Falls, Idaho.



WATCH THE VIDEO ▶



ALL THE LITTLE THINGS

- **Seat options** and **adjustable footrests** improve operator comfort
- The **Power Dump** allows you to dump the grass catcher without leaving your seat
- The **Hi-Dump** raises up 67 inches to dump grass and debris into a truck or trailer
- **Tilt-up decks** allow cleaning, blade sharpening, or blade changing in seconds



The Walker mower that does it all. It gets you out there with a snowblower, the out-front deck for leaf cleanup, and the dozer blade for quick sidewalk or driveway snow removal. Ohio County, Ontario, Canada, Idaho Falls, Idaho.



◀ WATCH THE VIDEO



MAINTENANCE

- **Tilt-up decks** allow cleaning, blade sharpening, or blade changing in seconds
- **Tilt-open bodies** give you full access to the engine, belts, battery without tools
- Maintainable **grease fittings** greatly extend the life of your mower
- Each Walker Mower is **reliable**, engineered to perform and proven to last



The Walker mower that does it all. It gets you out there with a snowblower, the out-front deck for leaf cleanup, and the dozer blade for quick sidewalk or driveway snow removal. Ohio County, Ontario, Canada, Idaho Falls, Idaho.



WATCH THE VIDEO ▶

See the videos at
walker.com/advantage/easy

Or experience the Walker for yourself on a **FREE** on-site demonstration.



Northwest Landscape Professional

The NWLP – Northwest Landscape Professional – is the official publication of the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals and is published and distributed quarterly to WALP members and extended gratis to select courtesy subscribers.

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IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Message	2
Landscape Awards Program	3
Conference Committee	9
2023 WALP Golf Tournament	11
Business Feature	13
Industry Feature	15
Remembrance – Stuart Nyren	21
Safety Feature	22
Industry News	29
Equipment News	30

Washington Association of Landscape Professionals

The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals (WALP) offers your company first-tier access to decision-makers in the Landscaping Industry. WALP reaches more than 3,000 landscape professionals and supporters with our print magazine, the Northwest Landscape Professional (NWLP) and online newsletter, WALP Wednesday. WALP also reaches out to Industry professionals and the general public with our innovative website. Gain access to this customer base for your business to business marketing needs and start promoting your company's products and services with WALP today.

For information regarding advertising opportunities, please call us at 800-833-2186 or email at info@walp.org.



Do You Have a Growth Strategy?

Will Bailey
Avid Landscape Management LLC
2023 WALP State President

Fall is a great time to take stock of your year so far, project year-end results, and start planning for 2024. Hopefully the financial information from these three data points show growth in your business!

Growth is an important part of keeping your business healthy through engaging your employees in their own professional growth to support your company, allowing you to shelter profit from taxation through depreciation of new assets that support growth, and keeping your business responsive to client/market priorities through new business development engagement to name just a few.

Business development activities, equipment and human resources, and capital all play a part in driving and supporting growth. Getting these working together requires a plan based on goals. Enter strategic planning. A good business strategy will allow you to gain competitive advantage in the marketplace by defining how you create value for your customers, employees and suppliers.

You may already have many elements of a strategic plan together. Strong supporting elements that most companies have in place include vision or mission statements, a list of values, and maybe even a number of written objectives or goals. Next steps should include clearly identifying the services you offer, your market area, and what niches or areas of specialization make you unique. From there you can set growth objectives for the following year or for many years if you want to think in longer terms. These goals in turn let you plan for facilities, equipment, and personnel and get the capital in place to fund them. The capital needed for growth in small business often comes from the profit that it generates. Therefore strategic planning plays a large part in how you set your pricing.

Strategic planning is a process. Reviewing your progress and making adjustments along the way is very important. The more you can include key staff in this process the more effective you will be at achieving your goals because they are clearly defined and all involved are clear on what needs to be done.

There are a lot of great resources available on the internet to help get you started on effective strategic planning. I hope that you take some time with your teams this fall to sit down and engage in a strategic planning session. You will reap the rewards of including this important practice in your business! 🌱

Mission Statement For The Washington Association Of Landscape Professionals

To promote professionalism, integrity, and education to a thriving membership within the Green Industry and the communities served.

Vision Statement For The Washington Association Of Landscape Professionals

- The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals is a publicly recognized and unified industry of landscape professionals who embody business and technical excellence.
- The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals provides and promotes the opportunity to mentor and support its members.
- The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals' members receive value and benefit by sharing knowledge, resources, and experience.
- The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals is the networking place and referral resource for "Green Industry" professionals.

"Defining Professionalism In The Green Industry"

WALP Office

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AWARDS PROGRAM



Northwest Premier Landscape Awards Program

*By Lloyd Glasscock
Awards Committee Chair
Northwest Flower & Garden Festival*

Fall is in the air! The nights are crisp and the days are cooler; before we know it our region's badly needed rain will make a return (one can hope). While the sunshine lasts it's a great time to get your photos finished and your entry in for WALP's Northwest Premier Landscape Awards Program.

For the unfamiliar, the purpose of the program is to recognize outstanding performance by member firms; foster pride in superior workmanship; publicize the Association and Industry and encourage future business for WALP members. Benefits can include pride in team accomplishment when earning an award and a ready-made method for updating websites and other social media thru images taken for entry forms. 'Bragging up' awards received is a good way to market a company to the public thru a website, blog post or press release.

Entering the program is fairly straightforward; it's a matter of taking images (even with a cell phone) and assembling the information on the entry form which is available on the WALP website, www.walp.org. It would likely take the average member 15 minutes per entry. The challenge would be sorting thru all the terrific

continued on page 4

The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals was founded in 1984 by a group of landscape professionals who wanted to define professionalism, develop educational programs, and evoke legislative representation on the issues pertinent to the Landscape Industry.

The Washington Association of Landscape Professionals (WALP) is a non-profit organization of landscape professionals dedicated to providing opportunities that promote professionalism, integrity, and education within the Landscape Industry through the members it serves.

projects you've completed to choose which ones to enter!

Cost to enter the program is \$155 per entry with each additional entry at \$125. Entry forms, as mentioned before are available on the website, www.walp.org. Deadline for this year will be Friday

November 3, 2023. Have questions about whether a project is 'award worthy' or what category to enter it in? Feel free to reach out to Lloyd Glasscock at kaibab66@gmail.com or call 425.422.3336. 🌿



Pictured, Carillon Point Property, a Grand Award winner for NW Outdoor Lighting. Also shown in detail on the cover.

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Entry No:

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WALP 2023 Premiere Landscape Awards Program**ENTRY FORM****Entry Deadline: November 3, 2023** USE

SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH ENTRY

All information on this form should be typed or carefully printed.

Entry Category

Cost Limits

Applicant's Firm Name

Phone

Fax

Business Address

Cell Phone

Email

Name of Contact Individual in Firm

Project Name

Project Owner's Name

Location/Address of Project

City

State

Zip

How to Take Memorable Photos:

- Use the highest quality setting on your digital camera. TIFF format is best if your camera has that setting. If not, JPEG format is acceptable. If you scan the photos, scan them to a high-quality JPEG file.
- Take before and after photographs.
- Take photographs early in the morning or late in the afternoon/evening.
- Watch the orientation of the light as it moves across your site.
- Check the area for debris, spent blooms, or other "ugly" parts.
- Try to get the greatest depth of field for a landscape.
- Bracket shots to experiment with depth of field or exposure.
- Look at a shot from different perspectives; higher, lower, or from a different angle.

Owner's/Owner's Agent Consent:

I/WE hereby grant permission to enter our property or premises for the purpose of photographing and publicizing the landscape project in this competition to the accredited representatives of the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals. It is understood that no fees or charges of any kind are required of the owner.

Date

Project Owner's/Owner's Agent Signature

Telephone No.

Entry No:

(For Office Use Only)

ENTRY FORM

Entry Fees:

- A fee of **\$155** for a firm's first entry and **\$125** for each additional entry must accompany this form when it is uploaded.
- Make checks payable to Washington Association of Landscape Professionals (WALP). WALP also accepts VISA or MC.
- Entries must be received in the WALP Office no later than 5:00 PM **of the due date. Late or incomplete entries may not be judged.** All entries become the property of WALP and may be used for publication or for any other purpose the Association deems appropriate.
- Presentation of awards will occur at the WALP Annual Conference or at a 'stand alone' event.
- The Awards Banquet is generally held in January as a part of our Annual Conference. You are encouraged to bring family, project designers, owners, and anyone else affiliated with your project.

Press Release Information:

List two newspapers in your area; please include contact person if known, e-mail addresses, department, phone, and fax numbers.

Company History/Personal Biography:

Entry No:

(For Office Use Only)

JUDGING FORM

To Be Filled Out By Entrant

Instructions: In the first column, check items performed by you; in the second column, items performed by sub-contractors; in the third column, items that were part of existing conditions or that the project owner did; and in the fourth column, work designed by the entrant. Use the remaining space to the right to describe work performed by subcontractors or to provide further explanations as needed. It is understood that all items may not be applicable.

Entry Deadline November 3, 2023

Entry Category

Entry Name

Date Project Started

Date Project Completed

Consent from owner, granting permission to enter the project owner's property for the purpose of conducting WALP's Annual Awards Tour? (Circle one) Yes No

	Work by Entrant	Work by Others	Existing	Designed by Entrant	Name of Subcontractor/Others
Benches					
Decks					
Drainage					
Driveways					
Fences					
Grading					
Irrigation System					
Lawn					
Lighting					
Ornamental Pools					
Placement/Rocks & Boulders					
Planters					
Pool Decking					
Seasonal Color					
Seeding/Sod					
Soil Prep					
Steps					
Swimming Pool					
Walks					
Walls					
Water Features					
Woodworking (specify)					
Misc. Work not listed					

Project Designed By: ☐ Owner ☐ L.A. ☐ Designer ☐ Contractor ☐ Other (specify) _____

Suppliers: _____

Judging Form

Entry No:

(For Office Use Only)

Description of Project

Special or unusual problems encountered

Photo Descriptions: Make sure the following descriptions correspond with your numbered photos. Do not display company name or logo on any of the photos (uniforms, trucks, signs, etc.) Do not put company name or logo on CDs. Please put project name on all photos.

No. Description

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	

Which photo(s) above do you prefer be used in marketing materials, website, etc. Please list photo number(s) below:



Team Building & Techniques

*By Will Anstey
Devonshire Landscapes
WALP Conference Chair*

I hope everyone was able to enjoy some of the beautiful Pacific Northwest Summer weather we were blessed with. As we come out of summer vacation mode and the kids get back to school we will be getting ready for Fall Clean-Ups, wetter weather, and scheduling out as much Winter work as we can between now and Thanksgiving.

We are pleased to announce that we have secured The Hotel Indigo in Everett for our 2024 WALP Annual Conference! It was a great success last

year and everyone seemed pleased, so we are doing it again. Please save the dates. January 11-13, 2024.

Stay tuned to your WALP Wednesday for more information as we finalize our list of this year's speakers. We will again be offering technical classes in English and Spanish, including WSDA Pesticide License Credits. For our business owners / managers we are looking into a more in-depth workshop as well as a Keynote speaker.

Now is the time to take some pictures

of your beautiful work for submission to the WALP Awards program. Get the recognition your company deserves from potential clients, and give your employees a sense of pride and accomplishment by submitting your best work. 🌿

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GOLF TOURNAMENT

The WALP Annual Golf Tournament was a fun event for the golfers and sponsors hitting the links at the Mount Si Golf Course. Thanks to our title sponsor Cedar Grove for their support and to all our sponsor for their support of the event.

The winning golf teams were:

1st Place: Josh Whittaker, Alex Hedland, Colin MacKenzie & Austin Comenaro

2nd Place: Don Aselin, Andy Momberg, Joe Weintraub & David Kenny

3rd Place: Jordan Telford, Robert Hobart, Scott Mutchler & Tommy Stewart

Individual Awards:

Closest To Pin #8: Andy Looney

Closest To Pin #11: Chris Ofthus

Long Drive Women #16: Julia Wiebenga

Long Drive Men #16: DC Israel

Thank you Sponsors!



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Why Are They Bringing You The Problem?

by John Marshall, Results Driven

It was 7:00 in the morning. The landscape owner sighed. He hadn't even finished his second coffee and already one of his team had dropped problems in his lap. They weren't difficult problems, yet he was the one who had to come up with the solution.

Why did they always bring him problems and not a solution?

He rubbed his eyes and stared out the window. With all the stress from their customers with their deadlines and change orders, he couldn't continue. He needed a solution.

As the owner was relating this recent story to me, I listened.

After he stopped talking, I looked at him. I said that he was the problem.

Yes, it was him.

He initially didn't say anything. He just stared. He rubbed his eyes again and threw up his hands. If he had a white flag nearby, he would have waved it. He would have surrendered, as he was so frustrated.

I looked at him again and said I had a solution. It was simple. Let me explain.

The idea was when a team member brought him a problem, they would also have to bring at least one solution.

The owner liked this idea. I further explained that this will take practice and a little time.

When someone brought him a problem, he would share this concept. That is, the person also had to bring a solution. This would be the new standard for all future problems.

To get it started off well, I told the owner that he would need to spend time with that person helping them to come up with a solution. The key would be to teach them his problem solving techniques.

I suggested he start tomorrow.

My client knew this idea would help his business and frustration level a lot. I told him there was one more level to this idea. One more important element.

I shared with him, that if a team member came to him with a problem and not a solution, he would tell the person to leave his office. Yes, he'd tell that person to go away.

And that person couldn't return or interrupt him until he had a solution.

Finally, I also shared with him that some of his team wouldn't be pleased with him. But - that was okay.

The first few weeks were rough. There was some awkwardness.

Soon, however, the team 'got it'. They embraced it. They did it, and slowly the company changed. Everyone was more proactive. They were more engaged. The owner was also seeing his team members in a whole new light, with their initiative in solving problems.

It's been a few months now and he's so much better. Less stressed. He's working on more important issues in his landscape business. He's even enjoying his coffee in the morning with no interruptions.

If you have team members that only bring problems and not solutions, start to implement this idea. If you'd like other strategies to grow your business, contact us. We're called Results Driven, for a reason. 🌱

About the Author: John Marshall, Results Driven

Being a business owner is tough. Often lonely. It's emotionally challenging. That's why John Marshall created Results Driven. He's discovered that when he coaches clients to Build Their Business IQ, their business grows. Profits increase, the business runs smoother, and the future looks brighter. If your business is struggling, it could be because you don't know your Business IQ. If you want to learn it, contact us: john@results-driven.com.



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The Green Meridian Brief

"The Missing Labor Force"

by Alan Burke, asla, Landscape architect, Classic Nursery

Someone handed me a list recently of all of the staff we've hired over the last three+ decades. Its almost 400 people. I went through and highlighted the problematic pinheads that I wouldn't wish on anybody. There were quite a few. Then I followed up by highlighting **the good people** that were – *and are* – consistent, creative and caring. As you might expect, *that's a much longer list.*

My feeling is that – in perspective, even the most dramatic problem will fade in your memory over time. People are people, with all their flaws and wonders and inconsistencies. I do think that if we can recognize the emotional needs and personal interests

of those that we work with, we can build relationships that encourage dependability and a greater sense of responsibility. But landscape contractors have a helluva time finding and retaining good quality staff. It has the sense of a problem that will never go away. When green industry employers get together, we all share up to a certain point – what we are doing and what methods we find successful. Then again, sharing these ideas can have the flavor of "finding gold up in them thar hills" – that is – if we do find a solution that works, the last thing we want is to see our competitor in our secret hiring spot.

At my firm, we hire a number

of different types of workers, from Nursery techs to production workers, design talent and outdoor craftspeople. We ask a lot of them. From administrative office staff to designers and of course our production people, our folks wear a lot of hats. Office staff are juggling all of the many accounts and administrative tasks – from HR functions to accounting and marketing and lead choreography. Our designers often serve in part as project managers – not only seeing people and prequalifying potential clients but also putting together estimates and plans – and implementing the project

continued on page 16



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with our production staff.... And our production people are working outside in all kinds of weather, pushing rocks up the hill in the rain – as I say. It's not necessarily a pleasant job – but we look for folks that can see the craft inside it all... We hope to instill a sense of enthusiasm with our production staff and hope that they can see the beauty in what they are able to assemble and get a sense of accomplishment from the ability to create habitat and remedy some of the negative effects of development in creative endeavors with plants and rock and rock, light and wood and water.

Entering my curmudgeonly years, I know it's almost a trope to say that *"folks don't want to work very hard anymore"*. This may or may not be true. I expect back in the biblical times there was some old codger who yelled at his son for writing on papyrus – when he could have been hammering out his message on a stone tablet. Such is the nature of progress. As in all things, moving forward can be a mixture of positive and negative. You gain something – you lose something. What we gain in automation – we perhaps give up in attention span. All that noted, today's topic *speaks to all of this and is about the labor force – or lack of it*. So let's get started...

Changes in unemployment stats

Anyone that follows a few economic indicators will know that we have been on a roller coaster ride with regard to the unemployment rate over the last few years. In January of 2021, unemployment was above 14%, with many employed people hanging by a thread. We are now in 2022 and 2023 at a historic low in unemployment of under 4% . This has been a breathtakingly swift recovery from the pandemic years. The Landscape Industry nationally is about a \$10 billion dollar business. It is estimated that nationally, Construction category

employment added 80000 individuals more for the month of July alone in comparison to the same time the prior year. Of these workers, 91% of them are men, with an average age of 41, *with almost 40% staying with a particular company for less than one year*. Even with what would appear to be people ready to work, there are a number of odd anomalies that are affecting labor availability.

First, a major portion of the workforce is retiring – or nearing it. Boomers like me are aging out – and the generations coming up now have vastly different attitudes about work. People are frankly stressed – and burnt out – as families ride the pandemic roller coaster. Childcare needs are more important than ever, as families need to juggle new and unpredictable demands from work and school. There is also a newly defined disenfranchised workforce, potential available workers that *have simply decided not to work* (Honestly I don't know how one comes to be able to make that choice and get by, but godspeed to them. Just don't take money from my pocket if you are able-bodied but choosing to stay home playing Call of Duty.) There is also, and importantly – a new attitude toward company loyalty – and the amount of time an employee will spend working for a specific company. This is a new dynamic that we are still putting a definition to. GenXers, now 41 to 56 years of age, Millennials or "Gen Y" folks at 25 to 40 years old – and the "Gen Z" kids at 6 to 24 years are redefining how we look at our work and careers. With what is being called the "Gen A" or "Alpha" generation, kids up to 5 years old, you can bet that the orientation toward work will dramatically change even further.

When we review a prospective employee, we will likely see now – a series of job hopping events...where in the past an individual might be at a job for the duration of a career, now we are

vetting applicants that may experience 10 or more jobs over the course of a working lifetime. One silver lining for employers is that – according to a Joblist survey recently, approximately 26% of people who quit their job during what is now called the Great Resignation of 2021 – are regretting it . And for those that quit and moved on to new jobs – 42% of those folks said the new job really didn't live up to their expectations. While 21% of Millennials say that they've changed jobs in the last year alone, 60% say that they are "open to a new job opportunity" .

This can be both an blessing and a curse for prospective employers, *no more so that in the Green industry trades – in particular the landscape and nursery business*. In prospecting for new staff, employers will likely see *more folks available to answer a call for a job*, but as they accept and start working – *they may not stay in place for as long as an employer would like*. This necessitates a new and redefined way of thinking that involves a mix of innovations, from creative benefits and remote work possibilities – to the building of a positive company culture, and all of these facets of the new work thinking become part of an employers toolkit.

For design and administrative staff, there is more of a push and desire for remote work. Statistics are showing that over the last few years as many as 4.7 million people are working remotely – at least half the time from home. This number has risen 160% since 2009. While 16% of companies are fully remote now, about 44% don't allow it – many – **like in the landscape production trades for very practical reasons**. Remote work offers both a positive and negative aspect to it as well. 74% of remote workers, say that having that option *makes them less likely to leave a company*. While a concerned employer may not really know whether staff are working as intensely as they might if they could be seen at the

office- conversely the employee may experience a situation where there really seems to be no discernible downtime away from work. *The office is right there in the spare room 24/7.* This might be to the advantage of a sales person that can take a call at any time – and thereby earn commission, but might pose a problem if a manager feels like they can call a staffer at any time of night or day. Employers need to be aware of all of the ramifications around remote work – and what the requirements and edges are in order to produce a productive workforce

When the pandemic hit and all the chaos ensued, as an employer and a design/build designer myself, I was immediately struck with very real concerns about how we were going to proceed. Within a week of the shutdown at our end, we had set up a zoom conference system and I was starting to do video conferences really

for the first time. **Now I could kick myself for not doing it years earlier.** Within a few days one of my first calls, I signed an installation for over \$150,000 – based upon a potential discussion on the video call alone. *That was an eye opener for me.* I've set up regular video conference times now and encourage our design staff to do this as well on a regular basis. There are a number of distinct advantages to working remotely or by video conference with potential and existing clients this way – *we can cover that perhaps in another episode.* But tools like Teams and Zoom have redefined our interactions and for many of us – we have the irony of a pandemic to thank for it.

Immigration and the landscape trades

For most of us in the landscape trades, the elephant in the room really

centers around immigration policy.

We live in a strange bubble where we find ourselves in a trade nationally that is **centered on a certain level of hypocrisy that we fully accept and refuse to acknowledge.** Ironically, statistics show that many folks that own and manage landscape companies tend to be more Conservative – and as such *they support a much stricter interpretation of immigration policy.* **In my view this is both hypocritical and counter productive.** For those in the installation and care trades, I think it's common sense to look around your shop and see that many of your staff may be Hispanic and come from a background that centers in Central America. The fact is that statistics show that almost 80% of landscape tradespeople speak Spanish over any other foreign language.

continued on page 18

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Business Feature continued from page 17

This is the case, everyone in the trades know it – and we all rely on our income from this type of workforce for much of our assistance. *We could certainly do better than to vilify and threaten the people that work hard to support us – with deportation and insults to their families and livelihood.* This kind of negative and unnecessarily acrimonious thinking – is just counter intuitive to what really should be happening. Everyone in the Green industry should have a fundamental understanding that the Hispanic workforce is central to our success. Historically this is true. There is no way to talk your way around it. The fact that – statistically – owners of landscape companies would support the deportation of individuals that are working to support their businesses is strikingly asinine. A better solution would be for the landscape trade associations to realign themselves to become strong proponents of immigration reform – and demand legislative change to strengthen and broaden this kind of legislation.

If Landscape companies want to “Solve the immigration problem”, they know how to do it. It doesn't require beefing up the border or building a ridiculous wall over a few miles of territory. Best of all – it's in place now and ready to go. The reform that is already in place and that would immediately solve our immigration problems is called “E-Verify”. The E-Verify Program is a national program. It's a simple set up, in which a person applying for a job has their social security number verified from an online national social security database. It is relatively foolproof – *and immediately effective* – in determining whether someone is documented or not.

So why don't construction and landscape companies advocate for E-Verify, if the owners of those companies are statistically more

conservative and want to be strident about immigration policy? *Frankly they know that it works and that is the problem.* Think about it. If it was implemented, construction and landscape companies would have to fire many of their staff in production. Then the owners of these companies would have to rethink their position on immigration – *and admit that they were completely incorrect...* So, lets make a leap of faith here. What if we followed the Conservative viewpoint right off the ledge and gave these owners what they purport to want? I know it doesn't make any sense at all, but stay with me here, because in my frustration about this senseless hypocrisy and double – talk, we really should look at the endgame. Sometimes I think that *if everyone was deported that is undocumented* – we would force a complete reset in our thinking nationally – because within days – we would suddenly have no tomatoes in the store. Our housing market would crumble. Skyscraper construction would slow to a crawl. Roads and bridges would deteriorate. Golf courses would become overgrown. The supply chain would basically go into lock up. *Folks might finally pay attention then – and stop all this bullshit talk.* This is of course crazy **and so practical**, it's impractical.

At the very least we should open our eyes – and show some respect and acknowledge what a large portion of our immigrant population is actually doing. **That would be basically everything.** Quit giving them a hard time about it. Let's recognize their sweat and determination – and give them a means by which to seek citizenship.

Getting round to the topic, these folks want to work. They are available an ready to go. An immediate and significant repair to our hidden unemployment problem would be to increase funding and cap limits for

the H2b immigration employment program. This program effectively allows employers to hire Visa – documented workers from out of the country and permits them to work domestically for 9 months out of the year. There is a similar program for tech workers. The H2b program allows 66,000 per fiscal year now, with a cap of 33,000 for workers who begin employment in the first half of the fiscal year (Oct. 1 – March 31) and 33,000 for workers who begin employment in the second half of the fiscal year (April 1 – Sept. 30). Our experience with this program is that these folks are glad to work, work hard, send money home to their families and return home each year with the promise that they may be able to return in a subsequent year. Granted, it's a cumbersome federal program with a good bit of paperwork. The program requires that the employer send solicitations asking for domestic workers. Anyone that has put in an employment ad knows that in the case of the landscape trades – *of course nobody local really applies* – so the company can then **supply a list of people that will apply.**

It's a great program that should be streamlined and exponentially expanded.

Another point of resistance for hiring individuals has been the mission creep in compensation expectation. We have seen not only an increase in the minimum wage – at least here in the Pacific Northwest – but also a general increase in expectations regarding compensation for hourly workers and construction across-the-board. This, I think is unprecedented in its speed and incline. Statistics will show that construction wages increased by an average of over 3% year over year, though many of us in the trades think it might be 5X that really – at least in the single home residential design/build market. What can a landscape company manager do about this? Well, you can certainly increase your pricing to reflect the new increases in overhead for labor

and production staff. You can also put new hires on a track for increased pay over time based upon performance. New laws in Washington State put minimum levels for salaried workers at a moderately unusual high level now as well. I think most salaried workers are required to be on a \$52000+ annual salary here with anticipated compensation needing to be posted on any employment advertising. This means further adjustments for some of your current administrative staff – *or an awkward discussion of converting someone from salary back to an hourly rate.*

New methods for hiring have changed the way that employers are seeking out candidates now as well. Word the mouth referral is of course a strong means by which to find new employees, but we are far from the days when Craigslist ads were adequate enough to bring in new and interested production workers. There are a number of new online resources related to hiring, but what you will find is that many labor production workers do not use them to the same degree that professional administrative and/or design staff might be reviewing sites like this . As such, online employment ad sites cannot be allowed to stagnate. You have to revisit them and refresh the ads to keep them on top. “Push” type social media ads, SEO hiring integration at your website and other innovative – and in your face methods might yield more inquiries from workers.

Building a company culture

Building an easy to follow, enthusiastic and pleasant culture within your company is sometimes difficult to maintain. We often have folks from different cultures, at differing age groups and that speak different languages. Folks with kids and families are easily tugged away from work functions and are hard to pin down for social gatherings. Having activities during the work day might triple the expense involved – when you factor

in opportunity losses – and of course weekday activities will usually not include families – a key component of who you may be trying to include.

Its also quite just frankly *hard to have fun*, despite what all the business owners that want to shine a light up your ass would have you believe about their hiring successes. We are – after all – *in construction*, and in doing daily construction tasks – there can be a certain level of stress and acrimony that will arise. It's important to keep this in check. Mid level managers in particular – need to be folks that are pleasant to be around, and that are easily able to provide constructive criticism in a way that does not disenfranchise an employee. This is a critical aspect of your company structure that needs to be closely considered. Offering events on a periodic basis that have food and drink is helpful – and thinking of ways to give awards and individual recognitions of merit is always a good thing.

On another note, one aspect of the business that we have changed – is to reset our thinking about the workers transition away from the company. *You will recall that earlier I noted that over 40% of landscape workers will stay with a company for less than a year.* Rather than thinking negatively about this and being troubled by it – you might want to instead *encourage and reinforce folks that want to leave* and take the next step in their careers. Whether they are going back to school – *or perhaps even going to another company*, we want to let them to know that they were supported, are honored and will be missed by us – and we wish them the best. This is especially helpful I think – *in reflection with workers that stay* – for them to know it is not a punitive thing when someone leaves, but that we do truly support the satisfaction and happiness of everyone in the workforce. (Especially the really bad production worker. I always give him lots of encouragement – and then send him directly over to work for our

continued on page 20

most obnoxious competitor).

Looking back on a number of decades in business, there are so many people that we have worked with that many of them I can't really remember. In the moment, in the day -I know that each and every person was very real to me. I'm sure that those individuals that caused problems *became the center of a stressful week for me at that time.* But looking back on it now – each of those events was just a *tempest in a teapot.* When you think along the arc of your life, *it's best to forgive and forget – and to move on.* Having a relaxed attitude, a pleasant demeanor – and being able to focus positive energy on those that have chosen to work alongside you – will

give you much more to be happy and thankful for. *Namaste!* 🌿

Alan Burke is a graduate of the University of South Florida and the University of Florida. He has a background as a practicing landscape architect in Los Angeles and Seattle. Pacific Magazine, The Los Angeles Times Magazine, Northwest Home+Garden and American Home Magazine have featured his design work and a residential garden design that he prepared at the request of the editors of Sunset Magazine is displayed on the back cover of the first edition of The Sunset Western Landscaping Book. His company, Classic Nursery & Landscape Company (classicnursery.com) of almost

40 years, has over 3000 followers on social media and has earned numerous awards. In the Spring of 2021, Alan and Julie sold their company to Alki Partners, LLC, where Alan works now as Design director. In 2021, he formed a consulting firm, 'The Outdoor Project Company' (theoutdoorprojectcompany.com/). He also curates a landscape industry group, 'Green Meridian' on Facebook – and produces the 'Green Meridian Podcast', a design/build oriented series of talks available on Spotify and other platforms.

This article is edited for WALP from *The Green Meridian Podcast – a Landscape Design Build Toolkit.* Listen on Spotify and other podcast platforms.

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Stuart Nyren

The irrigation industry lost a longtime friend and colleague



The irrigation industry lost a longtime friend and colleague recently with the passing of Stuart Nyren after a hard-fought battle with cancer.

Stuart was a highly respected staple of the irrigation industry for many years and a valued member of the community of irrigation professionals in the Pacific Northwest.

Most recently, Stuart served as a product marketing manager of irrigation, pump and waterworks products for distributor Winsupply.

“We became very good friends and we had so many enjoyable and laughing moments. I loved the music he shared with me. Music was one of several common bonds for us. He was so talented. His smile when we first saw each other is something I will never forget. Working with him was never work but enjoyable and productive for both Winsupply and Liberty Pumps,” said Chuck Schwabe, National Sales Manager for Liberty Pumps.

He also spent time at Smith Pipe in California, United Pipe and Supply and was a longtime supporter of the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals (WALP).

Peter Dervin, WALP’s executive director reflected on his more than three-decade relationship with Stuart. “Stuart has been a long-time friend and colleague, having known him for over 40 years, from the days at Smith Pipe and Familian Pipe in the San Fernando Valley to the times with Evergreen Pacific, United Pipe and Winsupply here in the Northwest. We shared many good times, mostly about our musical adventures. It’s been an honor to have had such a wonderful friend.”

Beyond his professional accomplishments, most who encountered Stuart found his interests to be far and wide. An accomplished musician, Stuart started playing drums at a young age. He played drums for several bands in Southern California and the Pacific Northwest during his lifetime including Early Man, OTC and Chase Street. Stuart and his beloved wife Terri loved to go biking, attend concerts and host family gatherings. Stuart’s passion for the industry and his outside interests was infectious. Most importantly, Stuart loved to glowingly share updates on his family and their accomplishments.

“After getting to know Stuart professionally, our conversations never included business. He loved sharing his passion for family and music. I always looked forward to him telling me about a new band or recent concert experience. Like many of his friends I’ve spoken to, Stuart typically asked about upcoming visits to Las Vegas to make sure a stop to see one of his favorite bands, Santa Fe and the Fat City Horns was a priority. I started to think he was getting a cut of their profits! He was one of a kind and I will miss him” said Steve Edwards, former colleague.



Stuart’s family has requested that friends who desire can express their sympathy with donations to Musicians On Call. This organization brings live and recorded music to the bedsides of patients, families, and caregivers in healthcare environments. Information on how to donate can be found at donate.musiciansoncall.org. 🌿

7 Tips for Readying Your Outdoor Power Equipment for Winter Storage

Prep Equipment for Season Changes, Save Time and Future Headaches

After your lawn gets its last cut before winter, it will be time to put away spring and summer outdoor power equipment, like lawn mowers, leaf blowers, and trimmers. What's next? Snow throwers, generators and other small engine equipment need to be readied for winter use. How and when you prepare your equipment for seasonal changes can save you time and money later, says the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI).

With record-breaking sales of outdoor power equipment, homeowners are spending more time during the COVID-19 pandemic working or renovating their family yards. This means more people are using outdoor power equipment, and OPEI reminds everyone the importance of proper outdoor power equipment storage, maintenance and safe handling.

“During this very challenging pandemic, we’ve learned our outdoor spaces are more important than ever,” says Kris Kiser, President and CEO of OPEI and the TurfMutt Foundation, which encourages outdoor learning experiences, stewardship of our green spaces, and care for all living landscapes. “Our yards, parks and schoolyards are our safe space for connecting with friends and family, acting as outdoor classrooms and offices. Green space also contributes to the health and wellbeing of people, pets and wildlife, and having the right outdoor power equipment to take care of it is key. But preparation is everything – understanding how to store equipment and get it serviced, how to operate it safely, and how to ready your space to use that equipment.”

He adds, “Always follow your manufacturer’s guidelines, and remember to keep kids and dogs away from operat-

ing equipment at all times.”

Here are a few tips from OPEI to ensure your lawn mower and other spring equipment will be available for use when warmer temperatures return, and snow throwers and other winter equipment will be ready for use when the snow falls.



- 1. Review owner’s manuals.** Re-familiarize yourself with how to handle equipment safely. Lost manuals can be found online. Save a copy on your computer if possible, so it can be consulted when needed. Be familiar with your equipment, and all its features, including how to turn it off quickly and safely.



- 2. Service all equipment.** Before storing spring and summer equipment, clean and service it or take it to a small engine repair shop. Drain and change engine oil and safely dispose the old oil. Service the air filter, and do other maintenance as directed by the owner’s manual. Check winter equipment and see if any maintenance and repairs are required.



- 3. Handle fuel properly.** Unused fuel left in gas tanks over the winter can go stale and even damage equipment. Before storing equipment, add fuel stabilizer to the gas tank, then run the equipment to distribute it. Turn the engine off, allow the machine to cool, then restart and run until the gas tank is empty. For winter equipment, buy the recommended type of fuel no more than 30 days before use. Use fuel with no more than 10% ethanol in outdoor power equipment. Use a fuel stabilizer if recommended by the manufacturer. Get more information on safe fueling for outdoor power equipment at LookBeforeYouPump.com.



- 4. Charge the battery.** Remove and fully charge batteries before storing. Don’t store batteries on metal shelves or allow them to touch metal objects. Store them on a plastic or wood shelf in a climate-controlled structure.



5. Shelter equipment from winter weather. Store spring and summer equipment in a clean and dry place such as a garage, barn or shed. Winter equipment should be kept away from the elements, but be easily available for use.

6. Prepare, prepare, prepare. Make space in the garage or basement before the weather changes, so there is room to store larger yard items. Clean up the yard of sticks, debris, dog and kid's toys and other items that can damage or destroy equipment. Clear the paths used regularly in your yard, especially during the winter when snow can "hide" things.

7. Have the right weather appropriate extension cord for your generator. Keep heavy duty weather proof extension cords on hand to use with it. Ensure the length of the cord is necessary to operate the generator a safe distance from the house or building. Never operate a generator indoors, in a garage, breezeway or under an open window.



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7 consejos para preparar su equipo eléctrico para el invierno

Prepare el equipo para los cambios de estación, ahorre tiempo y quebraderos de cabeza en el futuro

Tras cortar el césped por última vez antes del invierno, llega el momento de guardar los equipos eléctricos de primavera y verano, como cortacéspedes, sopladores de hojas y recortadoras. ¿Qué es lo siguiente? Las máquinas quitanieves, los generadores y otros equipos con motores pequeños deben prepararse para su uso en invierno. La forma y el momento de preparar el equipo para los cambios de estación pueden ahorrarle tiempo y dinero posteriormente, afirma el Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (Instituto de Equipos Eléctricos para Exteriores, OPEI, por sus siglas en inglés).

Los propietarios de viviendas dedican más tiempo durante la pandemia de COVID-19 a trabajar o renovar sus patios familiares, lo cual se refleja en el récord de ventas de equipos eléctricos para exteriores. Esta circunstancia hace que cada vez más personas utilicen equipos eléctricos para exteriores, motivo por el cual la OPEI recuerda a todo el mundo la importancia de un correcto almacenamiento, mantenimiento y manejo seguro de los equipos eléctricos para exteriores.

«Durante esta pandemia tan difícil, hemos aprendido que nuestros espacios al aire libre son más importantes que nunca», afirma Kris Kiser, presidente y director general de la OPEI y de la TurfMutt Foundation, la cual fomenta las experiencias de aprendizaje al aire libre, la gestión de nuestros espacios verdes y el cuidado de todos los paisajes vivos. «Nuestros jardines, parques y patios escolares son nuestro espacio seguro para conectar con amigos y familiares, además de servir de aulas

y oficinas al aire libre. Los espacios verdes también contribuyen a la salud y el bienestar de las personas, los animales domésticos y la vida silvestre, y es fundamental contar con el equipo eléctrico para exteriores adecuado para cuidarlos. Pero la preparación lo es todo: saber cómo almacenar los equipos y realizar su mantenimiento, cómo manejarlos con seguridad y cómo preparar el espacio para utilizarlos».

Y añade: «Siga siempre las directrices del fabricante y recuerde mantener a los niños y a los perros lejos del equipo en funcionamiento en todo momento».

A continuación le ofrecemos algunos consejos de la OPEI para garantizar que su cortacésped y otros equipos de primavera estén disponibles para su uso cuando vuelvan las temperaturas más cálidas, así como que los quitanieves y otros equipos de invierno estén listos para su uso cuando empiece a nevar.



2. Realice el mantenimiento a todos sus equipos. Antes de guardar el equipo de primavera y verano, límpielo y haga el mantenimiento o llévelo a un taller de reparación de motores pequeños. Vacíe y cambie el aceite del motor y deseche el aceite viejo de forma segura. Revise el filtro de aire y realice otras tareas de mantenimiento según las indicaciones del manual de uso. Compruebe el equipo de invierno y vea si es necesario realizar algún tipo de mantenimiento o reparación.



1. Consulte los manuales de uso. Repase sus conocimientos sobre el manejo seguro de los equipos. En Internet puede encontrar los manuales que haya perdido. Si es posible, guarde una copia en su ordenador para consultarla cuando lo necesite. Conozca su equipo y todas sus funciones, incluyendo la forma de apagarlo de forma rápida y segura.



3. Maneje correctamente el combustible. El combustible no utilizado que se deja en los depósitos de gasolina durante el invierno puede estropearse e incluso dañar el equipo. Antes de almacenar el equipo, añada estabilizador de combustible al depósito de gasolina y encienda el equipo para distribuirlo. Apague

el motor, deje que la máquina se enfríe y vuelva a ponerla en marcha hasta que el depósito de gasolina quede vacío. Para los equipos de invierno, compre el tipo de combustible recomendado no más de 30 días antes de su uso. Utilice combustible con no más del 10 % de etanol en los equipos eléctricos para exteriores. Utilice un estabilizador de combustible si lo recomienda el fabricante. Obtenga más información sobre la seguridad del combustible para los equipos eléctricos para exteriores en *LookBeforeYouPump.com*.



4. **Cargue la batería.** Retire y cargue por completo las pilas o baterías antes de guardarlas. No almacene las pilas en estantes metálicos ni permita que toquen objetos metálicos. Guárdelas en un estante de plástico o madera en una estructura con control climático.



5. **Proteja el equipo del clima invernal.** Guarde el equipo de primavera y verano en un lugar limpio y seco, como un garaje, un granero o un cobertizo. El equipo de invierno debe mantenerse alejado de la intemperie, pero estar fácilmente disponible para su uso.



6. **Prepare, prepare y prepare.** Haga espacio en el garaje o en el sótano antes de que el tiempo cambie, para tener espacio para guardar los artículos de jardín más grandes. Retire del patio los palos, los escombros, los juguetes del perro y de los niños o cualquier otro elemento que pueda dañar o destruir el equipo. Despeje los caminos que se recorren regularmente en su jardín, especialmente durante el invierno, pues la nieve puede «ocultar» cosas.



7. **Disponga de un cable alargador apto para el clima para su generador.** Tenga a mano cables alargadores resistentes a la intemperie para utilizarlos con él. Cerciórese de que la longitud del cable es la necesaria para hacer funcionar el generador a una distancia segura de la casa o el edificio. No utilice nunca un generador en el interior, en un garaje, en un pasillo o bajo una ventana abierta.

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	Supplier S-2	Supplier with Branches	\$550
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TOTAL PAYMENT AMOUNT	\$ _____

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■ Classic Nursery & Landscape Co. Ranks No. 4925 Among America's Fastest-Growing Private Companies



NEW YORK, AUGUST 15, 2023 — Inc. revealed today that Classic Nursery & Landscape Co. ranks No. 4925 on the 2023 Inc. 5000, its annual list of the fastest-growing private companies in America. The prestigious ranking provides a data-driven look at the most successful companies within the economy's most dynamic segment—its independent, entrepreneurial businesses. Facebook, Chobani, Under Armour, Microsoft, Patagonia, and many other household name brands gained their first national exposure as honorees on the Inc. 5000.

"This award is a result of the collective efforts and unwavering commitment that our team has displayed throughout our growth journey. I want to take a moment to wholeheartedly thank each member of our team for their dedication, perseverance, and relentless pursuit to creating a great work culture."

—Rodrigo and Roger Frias

The Inc. 5000 class of 2023 represents companies that have driven rapid revenue growth while navigating inflationary pressure, the rising costs of capital, and seemingly intractable hiring challenges. Among this year's top 500 companies, the average median three-year revenue growth rate ticked up to an astonishing 2,238 percent. In all, this year's Inc. 5000 companies have added 1,187,266 jobs to the economy over the past three years.

For complete results of the Inc. 5000, including company profiles and an interactive database that can be sorted by industry, location, and other criteria, go to www.inc.com/inc5000. The top 500 companies are featured in the September issue of Inc. magazine,

available on newsstands beginning Tuesday, August 23.

"Running a business has only gotten harder since the end of the pandemic," says Inc. editor-in-chief Scott Omelianuk. "To make the Inc. 5000—with the fast growth that requires—is truly an accomplishment. Inc. is thrilled to honor the companies that are building our future."

Since 1985, Classic Nursery & Landscape has been beautifying the Puget Sound area with lush landscapes. As a family owned and operated business, we offer personalized landscape design and construction services along with a renowned retail nursery to provide our clients with their ideal outdoor oasis. In 2021, Classic's leadership changes and careful innovation have been put in place that has resulted in business growth and earning the recognition as one of the best places to work in the Landscape industry by Lawn and Landscape magazine. Our mission is to help bring nature's beauty into people's lives by creating an outdoor space that will be enjoyed for years to come. We have been recognized as an green business by EnviroStars and as one of the Best Workplaces by Lawn and Landscape magazine. 🌿

More about Inc. and the Inc. 5000

Methodology

Companies on the 2023 Inc. 5000 are ranked according to percentage revenue growth from 2019 to 2022. To qualify, companies must have been founded and generating revenue by March 31, 2019. They must be U.S.-based, privately

held, for-profit, and independent—not subsidiaries or divisions of other companies—as of December 31, 2022. (Since then, some on the list may have gone public or been acquired.) The minimum revenue required for 2019 is \$100,000; the minimum for 2022 is \$2 million. As always, Inc. reserves the right to decline applicants for subjective reasons. Growth rates used to determine company rankings were calculated to four decimal places.

About Inc.

Inc. Business Media is the leading multimedia brand for entrepreneurs. Through its journalism, Inc. aims to inform, educate, and elevate the profile of our community: the risk-takers, the innovators, and the ultra-driven go-getters who are creating our future. Inc.'s award-winning work reaches more than 50 million people across a variety of channels, including events, print, digital, video, podcasts, newsletters, and social media. Its proprietary Inc. 5000 list, produced every year since 1982, analyzes company data to rank the fastest-growing privately held businesses in the United States. The recognition that comes with inclusion on this and other prestigious Inc. lists, such as Female Founders and Power Partners, gives the founders of top businesses the opportunity to engage with an exclusive community of their peers, and credibility that helps them drive sales and recruit talent. For more information, visit www.inc.com.

For more information on the Inc. 5000 Conference & Gala, slated for October 31 - November 2 in San Antonio, visit <http://conference.inc.com/>.

■ John Deere Stands Out With New 2024 QuikTrak™ Commercial Mowers



- John Deere debuts six new commercial grade QuikTrak™ Stand-On Mower models.
- The 2024 E Series models feature new enhancements, helping improve serviceability and maximize uptime.
- M and R Series models were redesigned from the ground up to provide higher horsepower and more fuel capacity than previous models

DALLAS (SEPT. 11, 2023) — Touting a new standard of commercial-grade stand-on mowers for professional landscape contractors, John Deere debuts its new QuikTrak™ mowers for 2024. The new Q800 Series models offer compact designs that provide visibility, maneuverability and ease of operation. New for 2024, the M and R Series models were redesigned to better meet customer needs, and the E Series models were updated to meet the growing demands of the landscaping industry.

“Our new QuikTrak mowers are game-changing machines equipped with features to help transform the way contractors work,” said Chase Tew, production systems & business

unit manager, John Deere. “With more speed, power and fuel capacity, our 2024 models deliver an ideal solution for customers looking to improve both productivity and profitability while benefitting from the trusted quality of a John Deere machine.”

The 2024 E Series models, the Q810E and Q820E, boast new features, including serviceability improvements. Helping to maximize uptime, the E Series models feature a single power takeoff belt design and aluminum commercial mowing spindles that make changing mower blades simple and fast. These models also include high-lift blades and a new belt cover design for easier cleanout. In addition, the Q820E QuikTrak mower now boasts a 23.5-horsepower engine, increasing mowing power.

The new Q800 M and R Series models, including the Q820M, Q850M, Q850R and Q865R EFI machines, have been transformed from previous generations to amplify speed, comfort and power. Now featuring a wider horsepower range, the M and R Series mowers offer optimal power, especially in challenging conditions, with 27-horsepower carb and 34.5-horsepower EFI options.

Promoting superior cut quality and after-cut appearance, the M and R Series feature the 7-Iron PRO decks, in 48-, 54- and 60-inch sizes. Anti-scalp wheels on the deck’s front and back edges help with uneven terrain, while the trim side bumper helps protect property and the mower deck. The height of cut features improved access and visibility during height selection, providing quick changes from 1.5- to 5-inch cut heights. In addition, the new

spindle covers were designed to help ease cleanout, getting contractors back on the job sooner.

The new M and R Series machines provide improved traction in challenging conditions due to the even weight distribution of the new low-profile fuel tanks, which are positioned over the drive tires on both sides of the mower. The optimized weight distribution helps stabilize the machine and provides better traction for mowing along slopes. On level ground, the even weight distribution also minimizes damage to the turf. Not only do the new fuel tanks help with stability, but the entire fuel system was also redesigned to draw fuel from both tanks equally, keeping the mower running for longer without refueling. Lastly, the two 6-gallon saddle tank design provides 114% more fuel capacity than previous John Deere models.

A compact design engineered with serviceability in mind, the new design allows easy access to complete maintenance and repairs. The front engine guard folds forward, providing access to the mower deck and to the engine to perform engine oil changes with ease. From the operator station, the leaning pad can be removed along with the service panels without tools, making it easier to perform daily checks and keep the area clean. There is no need for a lift to gain access, as the traction drive belt is accessible from the top side of the transaxles.

Keeping operator comfort top of mind, the new operator station featured on the M and R Series models provides improved access to controls, while keeping them protected, and provides

continued on page 32



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a cockpit-type feel. The reimagined design boasts a new operator position that helps optimize performance. The foot platform is 14% larger, combined with the forward pitch of the leaning pad, centers the operator over the pivot point of the unit, ensuring the operator feels comfortable and stable while driving. The wider foot platform also provides the operator with the ability to reposition over varying terrains. Lastly, the new display panel provides enhanced feedback, such as vehicle hours, fuel level, engine speed and voltmeter, in real time, along with

indicators for PTO, operator presence control, oil pressure and park brake.

The M and R Series models received tire upgrades for 2024, helping to improve curb-climbing capabilities and provide better traction. Factory-installed Tweel options, in 22- and 24-inch sizes, are also available for M and R Series models to help eliminate flats and downtime.

Lastly, customers who purchase the new QuikTrak mowers can benefit from the extended warranty of three years or 1,200 hours on the E and M Series

models, and three years or 1,500 hours on the R Series machines.

For the latest news and product information from John Deere, please visit JohnDeere.com.

About John Deere

Deere & Company (www.JohnDeere.com) is a global leader in the delivery of agricultural, turf, construction, and forestry equipment. We help our customers push the boundaries of what's possible in ways that are more productive and sustainable to help life leap forward. Our technology-enabled products, including John Deere Autonomous 8R Tractor, See & Spray™, and E-Power Backhoe are just some of the ways we help meet the world's increasing need for food, shelter, and infrastructure. Deere & Company also provides financial services through John Deere Financial.

For more information on Deere & Company, visit us at <http://www.johndeere.com/>.

ADVERTISER'S INDEX

Alder Springs, LLC/Rod Bailey	4
Bartlett Tree Experts	31
Big Tree Supply	11
Coates Landscape Supply/Walker Mowers	Inside Front Cover
Dream Turf, LLC	Back Cover
DumpDeck/AmeriDeck	17
H.D. Fowler Company	15
Horizon	31
JB Instant Lawn	10
Kuenzi Turf & Nursery	4
Loen Nursery, Inc	18
Master Builders Association	12
Peak Machinery/Bobcat	23
Pottery Land	10
Ragen & Associates	25
Rain Bird	20
STIHL	Inside Back Cover
Turf Star Western/Giant	14
Turf Star Western/Ventrac	26
Urban Forest Nursery	4
Wetlands and Woodlands Wholesale Nursery	9

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