

GreenSheet



RUPPERT
LANDSCAPE

Employee Newsletter

4th Quarter 2011

Management Fundamentals *By Chris Davitt*



Whether you're coaching a football team or managing a landscape crew, branch or division, the path to improvement usually involves executing the fundamentals.

In football, the fundamentals are the blocking and tackling. In management, the fundamentals usually involve planning, appreciating, controlling and communicating.

Planning—The planning process in business is very involved. It often starts with some of the higher end steps such as creating strategic plans and developing budgets. But every manager needs an ongoing daily planning process that involves some of the simpler things like creating checklists and setting aside a set time of day for planning out the details. This can be as simple as scheduling out your day on the way to work or going

through a mental checklist at end of each day before you leave your desk. The major point is that planning needs to be a daily activity whether you're managing a crew or running a major organization.

Appreciating—It is hard to find people that don't think this is a good management practice. But it's also hard to find people who do it as much as they know it should be done. Appreciation needs to be planned for and structured, or it most likely isn't going to take place. It doesn't come naturally to most of us in the midst of a busy day. Our daily planning process needs to focus on this, and we need to ask the question have we taken the opportunity to say thank you or to recognize a job well done?

Controlling—There are hundreds if not thousands of conventional control systems in business. Financial statements, job cost reports, management structure, are among the most common. Similar to the planning process, controlling is a daily ritual. If we don't inspect and check on what's



*By "inspecting what we expect" and being good communicators, we better ensure a successful outcome. In this photo, **Darrin Middleton (MDL)** and **Nelson Cornejo (MDL)** reviewed site plans and talked about expectations for the T. Rowe Price headquarters job that was fast-tracked for completion in just two weeks' time.*

important to us, it's unlikely we're going to have the desired result. Inspections can be done visually, they can be done with conversations, and they can be done by reading reports. But we can't assume the

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The Baltimore and Frederick branches have a yearly soccer match/appreciation barbecue that's enjoyed by their branches and their family members.

Ruppert Named ABC Metro Washington Subcontractor of The Year

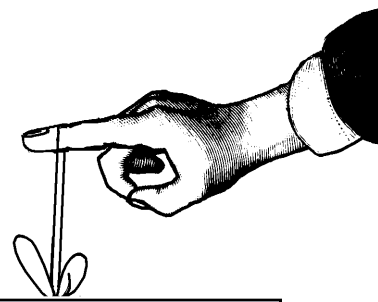
In a ceremony held at the McLean Hilton (VA) on September 15th, The Associated Builders and Contractors' of Metro Washington and Virginia Chapters named Ruppert Landscape its Landscape Subcontractor of the Year in their 2011 Excellence in Construction Awards program. This is the seventh time Ruppert has received this award that is given by the associations' general contractor community to the subcontractor that maintains the highest standards for quality and craftsmanship on award winning projects.

"Teamwork and cooperation between general contractors, specialty contractors and material suppliers are prerequisites for building excellence into any construction project," said Metro Washington Chapter President Debra A.



Schoonmaker. "The awards competition and awards, such as Landscape Subcontractor of the Year, serves to raise the level of construction standards throughout the industry by recognizing the workmanship of those who contribute and by showcasing the results of their dedication."

Bob Jones, Vice President and Director of Landscape Construction for Ruppert noted that the ABC award is one of the most meaningful honors a company can receive because the nominations and selection come from the contractors themselves. "It's gratifying to know that we have met or exceeded many of our customers' expectations and we are pleased to have been selected and recognized with this award."



Save The Date:

Management Development Day:

**Thursday, February 23
and
Friday, February 24, 2012**

Awards Banquet:

Friday, February 24th



**Location TBD...
Stay tuned!**

Employee Appreciation



The Maryland Landscape branch hosted their annual turkey cook-off on November 23. The entire branch enjoyed a Thanksgiving feast and individual crews were recognized for their award-winning work from the past year. Each employee received a turkey to take home and enjoy with their families for Thanksgiving.

Ruppert Opens Branches in Richmond and Raleigh

Ruppert recently opened two new branches in Richmond, VA and Raleigh, NC and rehired two former employees who are leaders in those landscape markets.

"These markets are both vibrant and growing areas with a lot of great customers," said President Chris Davitt. "We are fortunate, in this down market, to be in a position where we can be more proactive about our long-term staffing needs and take advantage of quality people who are available. Entering new markets with talented leadership who we have a history with made this the right decision for us."

These two branches join 13 existing branch offices that are located in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Georgia and North Carolina, supporting both the landscape construction and landscape management divisions of the company.



Kevin Hazelgrove

The company is reentering the Richmond market, where it had a branch in the late 90's prior to the sale of the company. **Kevin Hazelgrove**, a Mechanicsville, VA., resident, who was Ruppert's Richmond branch manager beginning in 1997 and continued to work for the company to whom the business was sold for 13 years, returns to lead the new branch. Ruppert worked on notable Richmond projects in the late 1990's, which garnered both

national and local landscape awards including Philip Morris headquarters and West Creek Development.

"We grew to know and appreciate the Richmond market. It has high-quality work and great customers and we are fortunate to have a former branch manager who knows the market and customers very well," said Davitt. "We plan to work very hard to provide the market with an alternative choice for full scope landscape services of the highest quality."

In the Raleigh market, a landscape management branch has been added to our existing landscape construction branch to enable the company to provide full service capabilities in this market. **Eric Blevins**, a Raleigh, NC resident, will head the Raleigh branch. Also a former employee of Ruppert Landscape prior to its sale, Blevins continued to work for the company to whom the business was sold for the past 13 years. Ruppert has been in the North Carolina market for the past two years working on notable projects



Eric Blevins



such as Duke University, Lowe's Corporate Headquarters, the expansion at the Time-Warner headquarters, and the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

"The opening of these two branches better positions us to be a regional service provider to many of our existing customers," explains **Phil Key**, Vice president and Director of the Landscape Management Division. "As we continue to grow in a down market, we are also able to provide continued opportunity for our employees to advance." This growth is right in line with the company's Five Year Plan, explains Key. "We are excited about being a contributing part of these business communities and are looking forward to servicing both of these markets."

Career Opportunities

Looking to move up the ladder or know someone in the industry seeking a position? Ruppert Landscape has the following positions immediately available:

Landscape Construction

VAL – Project Mgr. (1), Field Mgr. (1), Production Mgr. (1)

RAL – Field Mgr. (1)

Landscape Management

FOM – Field Mgr. (6)

VAM – Field Mgr. (2), Business Developer (1), Enhancement Mgr. (1)

BAM – Field Mgr. (1), Area Mgr. (1)

For more information or to apply, please contact the department noted.

Ruppert Projects Garner Awards from Green Industry Associations

Ruppert Landscape is proud to announce that six of its projects have been recognized for excellence by leaders in the green industry. These projects received awards from the Landscape Contractors Association (LCA) in their Excellence in Landscape competition, The Professional Landcare Network's (PLANET) 42nd Annual Environmental Improvement Awards Program and Associated Builders and Contractors Metro Washington Chapter's Excellence in Construction Awards Program.



Project Name: The Barbara Truland-Butz Healing Garden at Shady Grove Hospital (Rockville, MD)

Installed By: MDL

Project Description: This over-structure installation was unique in that it functions as both a healing garden and a green roof, incorporating over 30,000 sustainable plant materials that add both functionality and restorative elements to the greenscape.

Awards Received: Grand Award (LCA); Merit Award (PLANET); Excellence in Construction Award (ABC Metro Washington) Award.



Project Name: Square 80 Plaza at George Washington University (Washington, DC)

Installed By: VAL

Project Description: What was once a parking lot was converted into a multi-functional urban plaza, which incorporated sustainable elements such as biofiltration planters, underground cisterns, pervious paving, native plants, rain gardens and a bioswale, all of which assist with harvesting 100% of the on-site rainwater for irrigation, maintenance and other amenities.

Awards Received: Grand Award (LCA); Merit Award (PLANET)



Project Name: Marine Corps Barracks Washington (Washington, DC)

Maintained By: FOM

Project Description: Located just blocks from the nation's Capital, it is the oldest active post in the Marine Corps and plays host to 75,000 guests during the summer parade months. Among the job's unique challenges are its high visibility, high number of visitors and quick turnaround that is often requested to accommodate visiting dignitaries.

Awards Received: Heritage Award from LCA; Recognizes that the contractor has maintained the project in award winning condition since originally receiving a Grand Award five years ago.



Project Name: Mary Catherine Bunting Center at Mercy Medical (Baltimore, MD)

Installed By: MDL

Project Description: This 18,500 sq/ft project involved the installation of three eco-friendly rooftop meditation gardens and offered the benefits of sustainable design including helping to absorb rainwater, providing insulation for the building to reduce the amount of energy needed to cool its interior, lowering urban air temperatures and combating the heat island effect.

Awards Received: Grand Award (LCA); Merit Award (PLANET)



Project Name: T. Rowe Price Owings Mills Financial Center (Owings Mills, MD)
Installed By: MDL
Project Description: This project entailed the installation of erosion control measures, irrigation, turf, meadow grasses, and landscaping including several thousand shrubs, over 13,000 grasses and perennials and 300 trees. A project that would have normally taken four months, instead was "fast tracked" and completed in just two weeks' time.
Awards Received: Grand Award (LCA); Merit Award (PLANET)



Project Name: Turnberry Tower (Arlington, VA)
Installed By: VAL
Project Description: Access and storage space for this project were among the biggest challenges faced during the installation of this landscape. The building has LEED certification from the US Green Building Council and is one of the premier residential spots in Northern Virginia.
Awards Received: Grand Award (LCA); Merit Award (PLANET)

NewFaces

WE WELCOME THE FOLLOWING NEW LEADERS TO
RUPPERT'S GROWING RANKS:



Tim Carter
(NCM)
Mechanic



Curtis Facemire
(MDM)
Field Manager



Kellie Mason
(VAL)
Branch Administrator



Jaxx Payne
(CORP)
Receptionist



Doug Tipsword
(VAL)
Project Eng./Estimator



Michelle Williams
(CORP)
Staff Accountant

A warm welcome to our new crewpersons:

Salvador Abaraca (CHM)
 Josh Abendroth (LAM)
 Kevin Keith (LAM)
 John Moore (CHM)

Management Fundamentals

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desired outcome is inevitable without the follow up.

Communication—We all appreciate the power of communication. But in many cases, we don't take advantage of it because very often it's difficult or downright uncomfortable, which makes it easy to avoid. Very few of us over-communicate. Instead, we tend to err on the other side and don't say enough. Be sure to provide feedback to others about their performance and invite criticism about your performance and ways in which you can improve.

There are books written on every one of the topics mentioned above, which will give you more guidance and details than I've provided here. But the key point of this message is that each of these concepts requires studying, practice and discipline to make them work. By familiarizing yourself with these core fundamentals and then creating your own process that utilizes them daily, you will ensure that you continue to grow and improve your management skills.

Solar farm ... Helps Make Ruppert Energy Neutral



Ruppert's solar field, pictured here, cost just over a million dollars and is expected to pay for itself in just seven years.

On August, Ruppert completed construction of a solar field at our Laytonsville, MD headquarters. The project, which cost just over a million dollars, consists of 988, 3'x5' photovoltaic solar panels on three quarters of an acre, making it the largest non-institutional ground-mounted solar farm in the region (MD, DC, VA). The panels produce over 300,000 kilowatt hours annually and will completely offset Ruppert's electrical demand at its corporate campus in Laytonsville, MD.

The company constructed the solar field for two primary reasons. "One, we think it's our obligation to be greener and make less of a footprint on this earth," said **Chris Davitt**, President. "Two, many of our customers are looking at sustainability with regard to their projects and their own companies. Our undertaking this project and other green initiatives enables us to potentially be a resource for them and helps us connect with other like-minded individuals and companies who are interested in what we're doing. In the long run, we hope to help perpetuate and further the use of solar and other green initiatives."

Financial incentives really helped make the project more feasible. Ruppert obtained a federal grant worth 30 percent of the project's value, which helped to offset construction costs. In addition, the company receives a payment for the sale of Solar

Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs) through a local power provider. Those payments, which should continue for the next 20 years, start at about \$83,000 a year and will diminish in later years to around \$10,000 a year.

Prior to creating the solar field, Ruppert's annual electric bill totaled \$40,000. Those costs have been eliminated as the solar field is big enough to provide all of the electricity for Ruppert's corporate campus.

This solar project is the latest step in Ruppert's ongoing environmental commitment, which includes a LEED certified corporate campus, a hybrid vehicle fleet, installation of energy efficient lighting and water reclamation systems at several branches and the development of the "Green Smart Card" to help support and further educate customers about their site's sustainability initiatives.

"Projects like our new solar field forces us to learn and get involved," said **Craig Ruppert**, CEO. "But along the way we've figured out that the effects have been more far reaching. Our employees tell us they are proud to be associated with an organization that is being proactive with sustainability initiatives and in creating a healthier, greener work environment for them. Our customers are pleased to have us sharing our knowledge gained about environmental stewardship both through our work as a contractor and as a developer of a LEED facility. In many ways, the projects we've undertaken have paid off in ways we could have never anticipated."



Solar panels consist of a series of photovoltaic cells that convert energy from the sun into direct current (DC). In order for that electricity to be used in a home or facility, it must be converted to alternating current (AC) using an inverter, pictured here.

Community Service

*"A man wrapped up in himself
makes a very small bundle."
~ Benjamin Franklin*

Maryland Maintenance

Recently the Maryland Maintenance branch donated \$3500 in material and \$1500 in labor to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation 2011 Breath of Life Gala. Both Maryland Landscape and Maryland Maintenance are affiliated with the cause through their partnership with Federal Realty Investment Trust. This is the third year Ruppert has supported the silent auction gala.

Georgia Maintenance

All of the area managers from GAM attended a Toys for Tots event that was hosted by their customer, ProLogis. Additionally, the branch donated \$300 worth of toys to the cause.



As part of their ongoing community giving, GAM provided landscaping services throughout 2011 to the Elaine Clark Center, which provides services and education to approximately 120 children with special needs. The branch also took part in the center's Hustle for Hope fundraiser run.



From left to right: Kelly Driver (Elaine Clark Center), Adriane Hart, Steven Fraser, Steve Faber, Dori Faber, Cheri Faber, Ethan Faber, and in the front is Claire Faber.



Tim Walton, GAM Field Manager, and members of the branch, helped install a Japanese Maple tree that the branch donated to ALTA John's Creek (Senior Living Facility) in honor of an employee who was killed in a car accident.

The branch also provided labor and material to refurbish the Artist Garden and install fitness equipment at the Rocky Branch Elementary School. The Garden and the Fitness center are open to the community for public use.



GAM sent volunteers to the BOMA Volunteer Project to help rehabilitate the Men's and Women's shelters for the Trinity Community.

Pennsylvania Maintenance



Pennsylvania Maintenance's Chris Girardi and Bonita Wakeling worked with BOMA on November 19, 2011 to take part in the Community Involvement Day at Our Brothers' Place in Philadelphia, PA. They helped prepare and serve lunch to over one hundred homeless men, cleaned the kitchen and then prepared food that would be served for meals that evening and the following day. Our Brothers' Place serves three meals a day, 365 days a year and is a shelter program operated by the Bethesda Project. Opened in 2003, the shelter program has been the gateway for the vast majority of the men who now live in transitional and permanent residences.

Frederick Maintenance

On November 5, 2011 the Frederick Maintenance Branch helped with a general clean-up of the Frederick War Memorial. The effort was made in conjunction with the Frederick Rotary Club.

Virginia Landscape

The Virginia Landscape Branch rallied numerous branches to help donate \$25,000 of work, services and materials to the Jubilee Alliance, which raises awareness and revenue for Jubilee Housing, a housing development organization in the Adams Morgan community of Washington, DC. VAL's participation included the \$10,000 Jubilee Gala sponsorship, the Jubilee Back to School Store, Holiday Elf Store and Workday which had two hundred community and corporate volunteers.

Major Milestones

A HEARTY
CONGRATULATIONS
AND BEST WISHES:

JUST MARRIED



Joe Mangano (BAM) and Katherine Bristow-Mangano were married on November 11, 2011.



Pantalion Anibal Billafuerte (GAL) and Lucia were married on November 24, 2011.



Adam Bramlet (GAM) and Nora Little were married on September 10, 2011.

PROUD PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS

Enrique Zamudio (PAM) and his wife, Vanessa Perez, welcomed their son, Adrian Jahair Zamudio on October 18, 2011.



Adrian Jahair Zamudio



Carter Griffin Sinkiewicz

Dennee Griffin (RAL) welcomed her first grandchild, Carter Griffin Sinkiewicz, on November 18, 2011

NEW HOMES

Kevin Dubik (MDM) purchased a new home in Keedysville, MD.

Ross Edsinger (MDM) purchased a new home in New Market, MD.

Mike Fleming (BAM) purchased a new home in Elkton, MD.

John Holtzinger (FRM) and his wife, Jamie, purchased their first home in Gettysburg, PA.

Jeff Kostas (PAM) purchased a new home in Wilmington, DE.

Ben Ramos (PAM) and his wife, Marlenis, purchased their new home in Allentown, PA.

OVERACHIEVERS

Adrian Hart (GAM) earned her Category 24 Pesticide License.

Paul Brooks (GAL) has been accepted into ABC's 2012 Future Leaders program in Georgia.

Sean Davitt (MDL) and **Mike Felts (MDL)** have been accepted into the Leadership Development Program for ABC Metro Washington Chapter.

Brandon Simmons received a Distinguished Landscape Alumni recognition from SUNY Cobleskill at an awards dinner held in October. The program recognizes graduates of the Landscape Contracting major who have made significant contributions to the landscape industry and/or their communities in the years since their graduation. Brandon is one of the youngest and most recent graduates of the program (December, 2006) and he was recognized for his the leadership he exhibited on the Baltimore Inner Harbor job and for his ongoing and promising growth in his position at Ruppert.



Brandon joins **Doug Halsey (CORP)** as the second Distinguished Landscape Alumnus from SUNY Cobleskill to be recognized. Pictured left to right, Jack Ingels, professor and academic advisor for the landscape contracting program at SUNY Cobleskill and Brandon Simmons.

Movin' OnUp

Each employee should know that we are committed to his or her growth and development." ~ Ruppert Values, p. 2



Dusty Blakey (GAM) was promoted from Crewman to Field Manager. He started with Ruppert in August of 2010 and has been in the landscaping industry for ten years.



Jose Basilio (VAM) was promoted from Crewman to Field Manager. He has been with Ruppert since June of 2011 and has over five years of industry experience.