

# GreenSheet



**RUPPERT**  
LANDSCAPE

*Employee Newsletter*

**2nd Quarter 2012**

## The Power of Proactive Management

*By Chris Davitt*



**A**s we travel to different Ruppert offices, talk to employees and hear their stories, we are often impressed with the various personal and career successes

they've had and are reminded of the many different roles we play as managers. Often when we think about those in our lives who have made a tremendous impact on us—shaping our beliefs, goals and outlook—we think of our parents, children or siblings. But in many ways, company managers are often cast in the same role, either actively or passively, and can have similar and lasting effects on a person's professional and personal life. In many cases, managers are credited with not only turning careers around, but also turning lives around.

Managing people doesn't mean just running a job or crew efficiently and providing feedback at review time. It means going that extra mile to shape lives by reinforcing values, providing encouragement and guidance, following through, and often delivering a dose of tough love with a gentle touch when it's needed. There are countless examples of proactive management moments throughout our company's history, which at the time they took place, might have been considered a gamble or a stretch beyond our responsibility. As

we have the advantage of hindsight and many employees who have stuck around and provided us feedback after the fact, we know that many of those gambles paid off exponentially and had many far reaching effects. Here are a few examples of out-of-the-box management moments....



*2010 Food For The Poor Homebuilding Trip attended by Craig Ruppert, Chris Davitt and Isabel Vasco, in addition to many other friends and family members.*

- Finding displaced employees homes
- Taking a chance and giving people their first jobs
- Providing access to free legal advice in areas such as divorce, bankruptcy and immigration
- Testifying on employees' behalves in court cases, posting bonds to allow them to defend themselves and in one case, becoming an employee's power of attorney and resolving his affairs when he was no longer in a position to act himself
- Paying for funeral expenses and flying people to bury loved ones in other countries
- Re-hiring employees who have been terminated for cause because we

recognized their remorse and knew they wanted to succeed (some of whom are with us 20 years later)

- Funding employees' attendance on international home building trips and exposing them to the power of giving
- Paying the salary of a brand new employee, with no accrued time, for several weeks while her daughter was in the hospital
- Offering EAP, self-help programs and personal counseling that have helped reunite families and get people back on the right path
- Funding education including MBA's and numerous other job-related courses from language courses to public speaking
- Supporting and matching employee-initiated funding for team-members stricken with illness
- Providing financial counseling, which has included doing personal budgets with people, helping to negotiate down credit card debt and mortgage issues, advising employees on the merits of less expensive cars and giving assistance with mortgages, which has enabled several people to buy homes that they couldn't have done otherwise

My intention in sharing these examples is not to say "wow aren't we great for doing this!" The point I'm trying to make is that there are many opportunities on a daily basis for a deeper involvement with others. You may be their manager, their co-worker or their friend, but by making that investment and going that extra mile, the rewards for both the giver and the receiver are countless and can be far reaching.



# Ruppert Earns National Excellence in Construction Award

*From Associated Builders and Contractors*



Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) recently announced that Ruppert Landscape's work on the Barbara Truland Butz Healing Garden at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital project in Rockville, Md., has earned the company an Eagle Award in the Sitework/Landscape – All Contract Amounts category of ABC's Excellence in Construction Awards. Ruppert Landscape representatives received the award February 22 during the 22nd annual Excellence in Construction Awards celebration at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix.

"ABC is proud to recognize Ruppert Landscape for its outstanding work on the Barbara Truland Butz Healing Garden at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital project," said Michael D. Bellaman, ABC president and CEO. "This project embodies a commitment to innovation, safety and superior craftsmanship through creativity and skill."

The Excellence in Construction awards program is the industry's leading competition, developed to honor innovative and high-quality merit shop construction projects. The winning projects, selected from entries submitted



*Eric Regelin, 2012 chairman of ABC, Inc., and president of Granix, LLC and Debra Schoonmaker CAE, president & CEO, ABC of Metro Washington accepted the award on Ruppert's behalf at the February ceremony.*

from across the nation, were judged on complexity, attractiveness, unique challenges overcome, completion time, workmanship, innovation, safety and cost.

One of the unique components of this project is that it functions as both a healing garden and a green roof. As a healing garden, the area incorporates calming and restorative elements that encourage healing and reduce stress such as medicinal herbs and plants that provide pleasant scents, colors and textures and two water features that offer the pleasing white noise of water in motion. As a green roof, this same area has functionality that helps to absorb rainwater, provides insulation for the building reducing the amount of energy needed to cool its interior, helps to lower urban air temperatures and combats the heat island effect. "Because this project was on a hospital rooftop that was directly over operating rooms and adjacent to patient rooms, noise restrictions and access were particularly challenging," said Bob Jones, VP and Director of Ruppert's Landscape Construction Division. "All materials were cut at ground level because no power tools could be used in the project area, and all materials were craned to the roof using a 60-ton crane, adding to the job's complexity."

A panel of industry experts served as the competition's judges. This year's panel included representatives from the Design-Build Institute of America, *Engineering News-Record*, the American Institute of Architects, the National Association of Women in Construction, and representatives from higher education. Along with this most recent award garnered through ABC National, this project has also received a Grand Award from LCA, a Merit Award from PLANET and a Excellence in Construction Award from ABC Metro Washington.

Congratulations to all Ruppert team members who worked on this project including **Leroy Barton**, Senior Field Manager; **Jose Villatoro**, Assistant Field Manager; **Bill Ketchum**, Field Manager for Paver Installation; **Ismael Rivas**, Assistant to Bill for Pavers Installation; **Angela Howes**, Purchaser, and **Drew Dumann**, Production Manager.



*By exploring nontraditional open spaces, like the rooftop used for this project, an area that was previously devoid of amenities has been turned into a therapeutic and restorative environment that can be used by patients, visitors and hospital staff.*



# Community Service

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

Several employees from the **Baltimore Maintenance (BAM)** branch, including **Chris Madden, Brandon Simmons** and **Jenn Rodriguez**, participated in the Baltimore Ronald McDonald House's first Red Shoe Shuffle on April 15th. The race started at the RMH, winding through the University of Maryland campus, past the Bromo Seltzer Tower, through Orioles Park at Camden Yards, around M&T Bank



stadium and back to the House. All proceeds from the run went directly to the Ronald McDonald House Charity. **BAM** also took part in Earth Day, on April 20th, at the Baltimore Science Center. Brandon Simmons and Patty Pescrille set up a planting station to



help 150 children plant saplings in pots. Each child got to take home their sapling, along with care instructions, to plant in their own yard. The **Baltimore Maintenance** branch also teamed up with their customer, Liberty Property Trust, for the "Bill Rouse Day of Caring" event as part of a joint effort with Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Association to keep city pools open in the summer in order to provide a safe and cool place for kids to play. The branch donated trees, flowers and mulch to the Riverside Park Pool.



*The Laytonsville Maintenance branch helps with Earth Day celebration hosted by WRIT.*



**Mike Fleming, Josh Lawson, Scott DiStasio, Brandon Simmons** and **Christy Schinella** were on hand to help with the installation.

**The Georgia Maintenance**

(GAM) branch teamed up with their customer, Prologis, and two other landscape contracting companies by joining forces to donate plants, materials and labor to create "The Sunken Garden" on a section of the Hillside School campus. Hillside School provides treatment services for children ages 7 to 21 who have severe emotional, psychological and behavioral challenges. The finishing touch to the project was the installation of a bridge, which was handcrafted by **GAM** Employee **Daryl Mistretta**.



**Pat Cunningham, Kevin Wetzonis, Jason Robinson, and Ryan Truitt** of **Laytonsville Maintenance (LAM)** and **Elias Cedillos and Andres Rivas** of **Maryland Landscape (MDL)** provided their support for the fifth year in a row to the Olney Lion's Club

Mulch Sale, one of the club's biggest fundraisers. This year they delivered nearly 2,200 bags of mulch throughout the community in six hours, helping the club raise almost \$5,000. Ruppert supplied five trucks and a skid steer to aide in the event. The **Laytonsville** branch also took part in the Earth Day celebration which is hosted every year by their customer, Washington Real Estate Invest Trust (WRIT). **Pat Cunningham** and **John Harich (LAM)**, and **Doug Halsey (CORP)** led the pack of 40 children, ranging in age from 4 to 12, that came out to learn about recycling and floriculture, and participate in a flower planter installation competition where they were given a variety of flowers and plants to design the most dynamic pot. Past years activities have included tree and shrub planting, grass seed installation and horticulture.

**Michael Williams, Jesse Huff, Jonathan Leonard, Robert Russell** and **Martin Castillo** of the **North Carolina Landscape** branch provided help and support to the John Avery Boys and Girls Club in Durham, NC. They installed 90 yards of playground cushion so the kids can play more safely on the jungle gym.







By Dave Sanders

# Employees Play Active Role in Creating a Safer Workplace

**A**t Management Development Day we introduced the "Ruppert Safety Net", part of the 2012 Safety Improvement Plan. This program is designed to encourage all Ruppert employees to become more involved with promoting hazard awareness, preventing accidents and reducing injuries. By filling out a form that explains a hazard or unsafe act or situation that was observed and what action was taken to fix or control the problem, employees are eligible for prizes that are drawn monthly.

But perhaps more valuable than the prizes awarded, is keeping employees aware of the hazards around them and getting them in the habit of seeing and connecting hazards before anything bad can happen. Some of the observations we've received so far include:

## Equipment/Tool Related

- Ladders set up improperly and not on level ground
- Scaffolding set up incorrectly with no fall protection
- Rakes left on ground
- Employee using reciprocating saw and cutting toward himself and not away
- Pole saws with no blade guards
- Potentially hazardous trash left in parks that shouldn't be picked up by hand

## Vehicle Related

- Employees sitting in the bed of the truck while vehicle was moving in the yard
- Trailer door not latched properly
- Marker lights out on a truck
- Truck mirrors not folded in on a jobsite



*Conducting a job hazard analysis onsite, such as the one being conducted here by Bill Ketcham and Augustin Cedillos both of MDL, should become routine to ensure that we're catching potential safety issues before they happen.*

## Employee Related

- Employees walking under a skylift
- Workers horsing around near a man working on a ladder
- Employees hitching a ride on the deck of a walk behind mower

## Other Contractors/Subcontractors

- Contractors on site operating without proper personal protection wear such as hard hats, appropriate footwear, vest and safety glasses
- Subcontractor using scaffolding over 6' without a handrail
- Subcontractor on roof with a 20' drop not using a safety harness
- No fall protection being used by a subcontractor building a retaining wall
- Request from the general contractor to work on a planter at the end of a roof with no fall protection
- Welders working above employees who were spreading pine straw below, creating a fire hazard.

## Site Related

- No caps on rebar at a construction site
- Rebar sticking out of a concrete where a trash can had once been

- Sink holes in the road, manholes with no covers and open drain pipes
- Construction debris on a maintenance site
- Cars parked in a bad area that created a traffic hazard.

With every one of these incidents mentioned, steps were immediately taken to correct the problem and prevent property damage and/or injury to Ruppert employees, other contractors and subcontractors and the general public. So be on the lookout for any situation that you deem may be unsafe...whether on a jobsite or at our own facility, and share it as part of Ruppert's Safety Net Program. Not only will you be helping to educate others and make us a safer company, but you will be eligible to win a prize for your efforts!

## 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

**GAL:** CDL Driver (1)  
**MDL:** Field Manager (1)  
**NCL:** Field Manager (1)  
**VAL:** Estimator (1), Field Manager (1), Crewman (4)

### Landscape Management

**BAM:** Field Manager (1)  
**CHM:** Branch Administrator (1)  
**FRM:** Business Developer (1)  
**GVM:** Enhancement Field Mgr (1), Business Developer (1), Field Manager (2)  
**GAM:** Field Manager (2)  
**LAM:** Field Manager (2)  
**LOM:** Business Developer (1)  
**RIM:** Field Managers (2)

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



## Fred Key Promoted to Region Manager



**Fred Key** has been promoted to the position of Region Manager where he will oversee the new branches in Raleigh, NC, Richmond, VA, Lorton, VA and the existing branch in Gainesville, VA, of which Fred was the Branch Manager prior to his promotion. In this role, Fred will be a key resource for each of the Branch Managers and will help maximize

the division's capabilities in people development, training, customer service, business development and profitability.

Fred has over 20 years of industry experience and has been with Ruppert for 10 years. He began his career in the landscape industry at age 16 working for a competitor and in the next few years graduated from Salisbury State University with a bachelor's degree in business where he majored in accounting. He joined Ruppert at the age of 18 working summers and during school breaks and held many positions including Crewman, Foreman, Area Manager, Controller, Landscape Construction Production Manager, Division Administrator, Maintenance Branch Manager and Region Manager.

According to Phil Key, VP and Director of the Landscape Management Division, Fred's diverse background with holding so many different positions, in both divisions and in different markets has given him a strong foundation for the position of region manager. "His knowledge of processes, procedures and systems that he's garnered in those positions and his willingness to offer his opinion, whether it's a popular opinion or unpopular opinion, has really helped to increase his value in the organization," said Phil Key. "Fred has a steadfast commitment to self-improvement and he's willing to confront difficult situations head on, with both customers and employees, to bring about resolution. All of these qualities enable him to add value on many levels in our organization and we're looking forward to many future contributions in his new position of Region Manager."

Fred is a Certified Landscape Professional and in 2009, he received the Clyde Vadner Merit Award, which is presented to the individual who has demonstrated consistent hard work and dedication leading to exceptional contributions to the organization. Congratulations on your new position!

## Justin Gibson to Head Gainesville Maintenance Branch



**Justin Gibson** was recently named Branch Manager of the Gainesville Landscape Management Branch. He is a 2004 graduate of Ohio State University with a bachelor's degree in Landscape Horticulture. Justin has been with Ruppert for seven years and has served as both a Field Manager and Area Manager. "Justin's strength is building strong client relationships," said **Fred Key**, Region

Manager and former Gainesville Branch Manager. "He has an extremely high customer retention rate and has earned a reputation as a quality-focused manager who will go above and beyond to get a job done." Justin has managed many high profile portfolios including MRP, Buzzuto and Janelia Farm Research Campus and in both 2007 and 2011, he was honored with a Branch Impact Award for his outstanding dedication and contributions to the Gainesville Landscape Management Branch. "We are always happy when company growth enables us to provide opportunities for top performers like Justin to excel," said Key. "Recognizing outstanding performance and promoting from within are our company's most basic tenets." Congratulations Justin and keep up the good work!



Ethan Sansbury



Braxton Williams



Derek Kohler

**Derek Kohler** (FRM) was promoted from Crewman to a Field manager position.

**Ethan Sansbury** (CHM) was promoted from the position of Enhancement Field Manger to Area Manager and **Braxton Williams** (CHM) was promoted from Asst. Field Manager to a Field Manager position.



Anibal Silva

**Anibal Silva** (GAM) was promoted from Asst. Field Manager to a Field Manager position.



Alejandro Hernandez

**Alejandro Hernandez** (PAM) was promoted from Crewman to an Asst. Field Manager position.



Mike Pisciotta

**Mike Pisciotta** (VAL) was promoted from a Crewman to a Field Manager position.

**Daryl Mistretta** (GAM) was promoted from Crewman to an Asst. Field Manager position (not pictured).



# Growth Spurs New Branch Opening in Lorton, Virginia



David Keffer

**R**uppert recently expanded its Virginia operations to include a branch in Lorton, VA. The branch services the areas of Woodbridge, Alexandria, Arlington, Crystal City, Tysons Corner and parts of Fairfax.

This branch, which was begun as a satellite operation over a year ago, is right in line with the company's Five Year Plan according to **Phil**

**Key**, Vice President and Director of the Landscape Management Division. "Every time we grow in the markets we serve it gives us more density, which means less travel time to our jobs. This provides more value for our customers, which, in turn, perpetuates more growth."

The branch is anchored by relationships developed with several key property management companies including Lincoln Property Company, WRIT Management and The Adler Group. According to Key, **David Keffer**, who was promoted to run the Lorton operation, was instrumental in cultivating those relationships when he served as an Area Manager in both the Gainesville, VA branch and the Lorton satellite operation. "The promotion of David Keffer to Branch Manager in Lorton gave us the continuity we desired for our customers as David had been a leader in that market and essentially managing all of the branch's work already," said Key. "He has over 25 years of industry experience and really helped build this branch from ground up, including finding the location for the facility when it was introduced as a satellite operation, establishing our presence in the market through strong customer service and attention to detail, and building a

strong and dedicated team." David was recognized with a Branch Impact Award for Gainesville Maintenance in 2008 for his outstanding dedication and contributions.

With the addition of new branches, we are also able to provide continued opportunity for advancement within our organization and take advantage of a pool of talent that exists as a result of layoffs and the closures of other companies. The Lorton team includes: **Walter Guittierrez** (Asst. Field Manager), **Rafael Amaya Castaneda** (Asst. Field Manager), **Nelson Fuentes** (Asst. Field Manager), **Peter Boucher** (Field Manager) **Manuel Lopez** (Enhancement Field Manager), **Joaquin Aparicio** (Field Manager), **Jemee Lobo-Martinez** (Field Manager), **Neil Rout** (Field Manager), **Ulices Cordona** (Field Manager), **Tom Flint** (Area Manager) and **Lidia Cruz** (Office Assistant).

The Lorton branch joins 14 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.



## Employee Appreciation

**A**s a way of saying thank you to their employees for all of the hard work put in over the spring, many of the branches including **Virginia Landscape**, **North Carolina Landscape**, **Raleigh Maintenance**, **Forestville Maintenance** and **Laytonsville Maintenance** each hosted appreciation events for their employees. The branches took the afternoons off to enjoy the weather, cook out and participate in team building events ranging from pull-up contests, rope climbing, corn toss games and soccer as well as recognizing promotions and years of service.



Jack Jones (right) from the Forestville branch honors Luis Alvarez (left) with his two year anniversary coin.



## Employee Appreciation *continued*



Virginia Landscape cooked out on the grill and had a corn toss tournament.



NCL and RAM enjoyed themselves at a ropes course in Durham, NC.

## Major Milestones

### JUST MARRIED



**Matt Froncillo** (PAM) and his wife Kristen were married on May 4, 2012.



Harmony Trinidad

**Cindy Guillen** (GAM/GAL) and her husband, Jorge, welcomed a baby girl, Harmony, on May 4, 2012.

**Jerry Scott** (GAM) and his girlfriend welcomed a baby girl, Anna, on June 3, 2012.



Anna Scott

### PROUD PARENTS



Audrey Rowland

**Brad Rowland (VAL)** and his wife, Amy, welcomed a baby girl, Audrey, on June 4, 2012. Audrey has a big brother, Tyler, who is 2 years old.



Natalie Ruppert

**Jack Ruppert** (LAM) and his wife, Gloria, welcomed a baby girl, Natalie, on May 30, 2012.

A HEARTY  
CONGRATULATIONS AND  
BEST WISHES:

### NEW HOMES

**Charles Boxall** (LAM) purchased his first home in Harper's Ferry, WV.

### OVER ACHIEVERS

The **Frederick Maintenance** branch was honored with the "Key Award" from the Rotary Public of Frederick for their clean-up efforts and landscaping contributions toward the Frederick War Memorial.



Pedro Hernandez

**Pedro Hernandez** (FRM) earned his United States Citizenship.

**Tim Basista** (PAM) and **Jeff Kostas** (PAM) both attained their Pesticide Applicator Licenses.



# NewFaces

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



**Syed Ali**  
(GAM)  
Field Manager



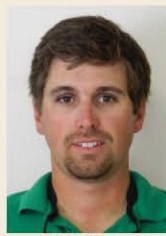
**Peter Boucher**  
(LOM)  
Field Manager



**Robert Bunch**  
(RIM)  
Field Manager



**Becky Demler**  
(CORP)  
Receptionist



**Tim Depp**  
(RAM)  
Field Manager



**Kyle Ennis**  
(RIM)  
Field Manager



**Keith Evans**  
(GAM)  
Asst Field Mgr



**Collins Fitts**  
(RAM)  
Area Manager



**Tom Flint**  
(LOM)  
Area Manager



**Luis Gamboa**  
(VAL)  
Field Manager



**Chris Gramley**  
(GAM)  
Field Manager



**Francis McCarry**  
(PAM)  
Asst Field Mgr



**Stephanie Mercado**  
(NCL)  
Branch Admin



**Stephen Merrill**  
(GAM)  
Field Manager



**Juan Moreno**  
(GAM)  
Asst. Field Mgr



**Peter Oshana**  
(FOM)  
Business Dev Mgr



**Jennifer Porter**  
(RIM)  
Branch Admin



**Joshua Price**  
(GAL)  
Driver



**Ryan Rote**  
(LAM)  
Field Manager



**Jack Schroeder**  
(GAM)  
Field Manager



**Dave Sharry**  
(RIM)  
Area Manager



**Wesley Skipper**  
(GAM)  
Field Manager



**Daniel Stutts**  
(GAM)  
Field Manager

## A warm welcome to our new crewpersons:

Jonathan Akers (RIM)  
Macario Alvarado (GAM)  
Barry Baccus Wills (FOM)  
Eduardo Barron (GAM)  
Eric Beasley (RIM)  
Jose Benjume (GAM)  
Jose Bonilla Anrade (FOM)  
Corey Brower (RIM)  
Dylan Carver (RIM)  
Julio Castaneda (GAM)  
Christopher Chandler (GAM)  
Ricardo Correa (GAM)  
Eric Coto (GAL)  
Nicola Cutrone (PAM)  
Sean Fields (GAM)  
Luis Florez Valbuena (GAM)  
Adam Frizzell (GAM)  
Sufi Furaha-Ali (PAM)  
Emilo Gonzalez (GAM)  
Michael Gonzalez (GAM)  
Oscar Gonzalez (GAM)

Anthony Graham (PAM)  
Jose Granados (PAM)  
Timothy Grove (RIM)  
William Harrison (FOM)  
Jesus Hernandez (PAM)  
Mario Hernandez (GAM)  
Jaime Herrera (PAM)  
Scott Hurst (RIM)  
Shane Janney (RIM)  
Robert Kent (PAM)  
Kevin Kinsella (PAM)  
Mauricio Martinez (PAM)  
Ralph Mason (GAM)  
Eduardo Matos (PAM)  
Jarius Mayweather (GAM)  
Cameron Meads (RIM)  
Jonathan Medina (PAM)  
Oswel Molina (PAM)  
Jose Murcia (GAM)  
Henry Navarro (FOM)  
Anthony Oliverio (FOM)

Justin Ortiz (PAM)  
Yorch Palacio (GAM)  
Kevin Piddicord (RIM)  
Carlos Ramirez (GAL)  
Danny Ramirez (GAL)  
Leonardo Ramos (GAM)  
Shane Reese (GAM)  
Alejandro Rincon (GAM)  
Jose Robles Herrera (GAM)  
Rafael Rodriguez (GAM)  
Umberto Romero (GAM)  
Julio Ruiz (PAM)  
Jerry Scott (GAM)  
Brandon Smallwood (FOM)  
Ronald Sockwell (FOM)  
Joshua Steedly (GAM)  
Casey Taylor (RIM)  
Randy Thomas (GAM)  
Brandon White (RIM)  
Vonetta Wills (FOM)

## PICNIC REMINDER



The company picnic will be held on Saturday, August 25th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Six Flags America in Bowie, MD. More details / invitations to follow. Be sure to mark it on your calendar!