

# Green Sheet

RUPPERT LANDSCAPE NEWSLETTER

2ND QUARTER 2019

*The Greensheet is our quarterly newsletter, which allows us to share general company information, including safety practices, profiles of our key jobs and community service initiatives, as well as personal achievements, including employee marriages, new babies, promotions and training certifications, in the hopes that it will provide unique insight into our company, our practices and most importantly, our people.*

## Empowering Through Delegation

By Craig Ruppert



One of the things I like best about my job is getting to visit branches and interact with our team members. As our company grows, that certainly gets more

challenging. But over the past few months, I've had the opportunity to visit about 15 of our 23 branches. There are so many things that are going well: I see great teamwork and many young and eager leaders; great looking facilities, and a fleet that is sharp and projects a great image in our community. One of the biggest challenges I see across the board, however, is the bottleneck of work that builds up in the spring as our jobs are in full swing. In particular, area managers (on the maintenance side) and production managers and assistant production managers (on the construction side) have a lot of responsibilities. These mid-level manager positions are juggling anywhere from 20-80 customers and working hard to keep those customers informed and happy, the job on track, and their teams moving forward.



So, what could we be doing differently to create more time? Mid-level managers should be using every opportunity they can to delegate more and shift more responsibility to field managers, encouraging them to make decisions and empowering them to do more.

Our field managers are more capable than we realize. They deserve more of our trust, responsibility and coaching. It's often easier in the short term to do it ourselves rather than delegate it. Over time, however, delegating has a much better return

on investment. It prepares our field managers to move up, expands their knowledge and increases their engagement. Whether it's horticulture related, production related, or customer related, teaching and coaching is an underutilized skill and important obligation of a leader and a manager. So when we delegate a task, it's important to explain not just how to do something, but why it's important that we do it. In doing so, we will enable our field managers to contribute more, learn

*Continued on page 5*

# The Evolution of Hardwood Mulch

By Chuck Whealton, Region Manager



**M**ulching consists of using organic products as a covering to conserve moisture, reduce soil temperatures, and control weed growth around desired plants. This practice predates written gardening records, as far back as the 17th century. To this day, farmers and homeowners mulch using organics such as leaves, manure, grass clippings, and the hardwood that is universally referred to as mulch. Hardwood mulch as a product, and mulching as a horticultural practice, have greatly evolved over the last fifty years, and not necessarily to the benefit of plants. In fact, the preoccupation with the aesthetic value of mulching has led to an epidemic of over-mulching from a horticultural perspective.

## The History

In the 1960s, hardwood (also called bark) mulch grew in popularity throughout the Mid-Atlantic and other areas where hardwood forests were prevalent. Fueled by growth in the housing market and furniture business, the lumber industry was booming. Every lumber mill had a mountain of decomposing bark—a waste product generated in the debarking of logs for lumber—that they needed to dispose of. By grinding it up a little finer, hardwood bark fit the description of what mulch should be: it was organic, retained moisture, controlled weed growth, partially decomposed, was dark in color and attractive in the landscape. The measure of mulch quality was determined by three main factors: finer was better

than coarse, darker was better than light (meaning it had aged longer), and a higher bark content (vs. wood content) meant that the color would fade more slowly. For the next twenty years, well-aged quality mulch was inexpensive and readily available.

By the early 1990s, the furniture industry had moved abroad and the lumber industry in the U.S. was in decline. At the same time, municipalities banned organic green waste in traditional landfills (tree trunks/branches/leaves, shrub trimmings, grass clippings, etc.) due to disposal costs. It had to go somewhere, and so it became a convenient and inexpensive mulch additive. At first it was limited to twenty percent or less by volume, but over time, with improved composting practices, the percent of green waste and wood content increased. By this time, the rich dark appearance of mulch had become synonymous in customers' minds with well-maintained landscapes, with a "more is better" (or at least better looking) mentality.

Fast forward to the present day, and the lumber industry has all but disappeared. Quality mulch is now a manufactured mix of green waste, ground up stumps and land clearing debris, aged for only a few months and dyed to maintain aesthetic expectations. Lesser quality manufacturers will inject a stream of processed wood, including pallets and construction debris, into their mulch, bringing with it nails, glass, and other foreign material. A higher wood content also means that the mulch takes longer and requires more nutrients to completely decompose. The result is a mulch product far different from its original intent.

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## Visual Signs of Buried Root Flares and Over-Mulching on Trees

The obvious sign is not being able to visually locate the root flare. The first evidence that a buried root flare is negatively impacting tree health is a yellowing of the foliage and early leaf coloration and drop. Over time, symptoms include stunted leaf size, reduced rate of growth, and dieback in the upper crown. This weakened state predisposes the tree to disease and a variety of other environmental factors.







# Strains and Sprains

By Dave Sanders, Director of Safety and Risk



**H**ighly physical work can be dangerous; landscape maintenance and construction are no exception. Every day our field teams are at risk of slipping, tripping and falling, getting cuts, and experiencing strains and sprains. The good news is that these injuries are mostly preventable, and by following simple proactive measures we can

greatly reduce or eliminate hazards, keep our people safe, and improve productivity.

### Common Causes

Sprains and strains both refer to soft tissue damage: strains are overstretched, torn, or twisted tendons or muscles; sprains are ligaments that have suffered similar damage. Both types of injuries can happen suddenly. Common causes include walking or working on an uneven, sloped, or slippery surface, twisting or pivoting suddenly, falling or landing on the wrist or hand, and lifting heavy objects or lifting anything improperly. Strains, especially, can happen when sitting or walking in an awkward position for long periods of time.

### Preventative Measures

Sprains and strains are painful and may require long recovery periods. The following practices can help prevent them from happening:

#### Personal Care

- **Warm up properly before exercise or working:** Warming up the muscles increases their range of motion and helps to avoid strains and tears to muscles and ligaments.
- **Exercise regularly:** Regular conditioning and stability exercises build strength, flexibility, and help prevent injuries.
- **Follow a nutritious diet:** Proper nutrition along with adequate rest helps us be more alert and focused, lowering the risk of injury.
- **Wear appropriate footwear:** Wear shoes with good traction and proper support for ankle and knee joints to help prevent twists and falls.

#### Work Environment

- **Planning and identification:** Before mounting/



*If wet, a slope like this could become hazardous.*

dismounting vehicles and equipment and before operating equipment, identify hazards and make sure safety guards are in place. Watch out for slippery or uneven surfaces or obstacles that may cause an accident, and do not operate on wet slopes or on slopes greater than the manufacturer's recommendation. If it looks unsafe, it probably is.

- **Practice good housekeeping:** Ensure that work areas and surrounding walkways are clear of debris or clutter. That way, once equipment and tools are being used, there are no mishaps.
- **Use protective equipment:** In addition to the requisite PPE, use handles when carrying loads, and use knee and shoulder pads to protect yourself when kneeling or carrying materials.
- **Get help when needed:** If material weighs more than 50 pounds, ask for help. Make sure you lift with your legs and hold the load close to your body.
- **Stay hydrated and take a break:** Drink plenty of water, as dehydration and heat stroke can happen rapidly. Sitting or standing in one position for too long or performing repetitive actions can put undue strain on muscles. Take regular breaks and stretch to release the muscles.

#### Training

- **Review safety practices regularly:** Training is critical to maintaining a safety-first attitude. Examples are our daily "Stretch and Flex" and proper lifting techniques.
- **Become informed of early signs of strains and sprains:** The most common signs of strains are inflammation, pain or weakness in the back, legs, feet or knees. The most common early signs of sprains

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# Timing is Everything:

## Contract Your Snow and Ice Removal Services in Summer

By Josh Nichols, Regional Snow Manager



**W**hen it comes to contracting your snow & ice removal services, proper timing rarely gets the attention it deserves. As a result, it ends up happening much later in the year than it should. As contrary as it sounds, the best time to sign a snow contract—both for the contractor and customer—is over the summer months. Waiting until September or later

to start thinking about snow could lead to higher costs or the potential for your ideal contractor to reach capacity, leaving you with a second-choice contractor that may be over-committed and therefore provide sub-par service.

The following are just a few reasons to start thinking about your snow contract now:

- **Planning** – In general, an average sized job can take eight hours of planning over the course of a couple of months to be properly set up for the season. This planning process incorporates:



- **Route Creation** – Assigning each site the appropriate amount of resources and routing to provide for optimal delivery of services.
- **Pre-Season Site Inspections** – Visiting each site in advance of the first weather event to map out

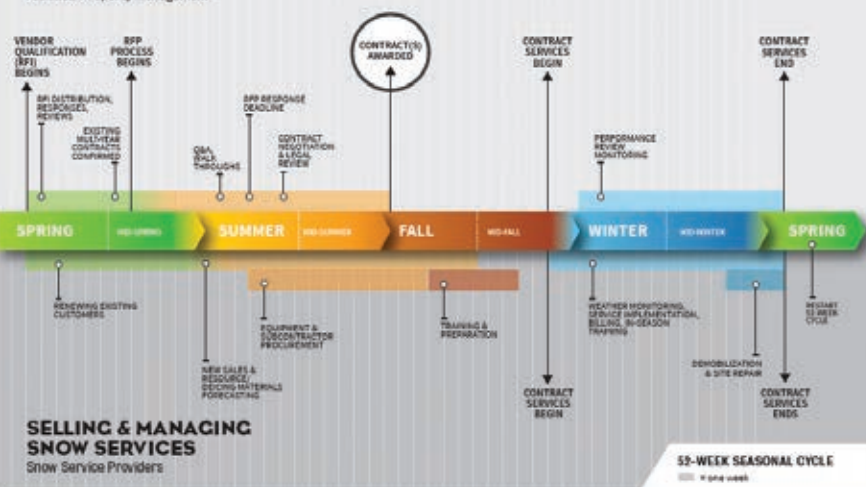
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## Don't Believe Us? Trust the Experts

### BEST PRACTICES IN SNOW SERVICE PROCUREMENT: 52-WEEK TIMELINE

#### BUYING SNOW SERVICES

Facilities/Property Management



YOUR SOURCE FOR SNOW & ICE MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP  
[www.sima.org/bestpractices](http://www.sima.org/bestpractices)

The Snow & Ice Management Association (SIMA) has developed a 52-week timeline that shares best practices in the procurement of snow services. This document was created by a group of facility managers, snow contractors, and SIMA staff who collaborated on the entire process from start to finish. The timeline captures both the buyers and sellers' point of view, with the intent to provide awareness to all aspects of the process and what can go wrong without timely planning. Note that the ideal time to begin contract negotiation is in summer, with contracts being awarded by the end of summer. For more information, visit [www.sima.org/bestpractices](http://www.sima.org/bestpractices).

## Empowerment Through Delegation

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more, and earn more. This will then help increase the tenure of our field managers as well as the tenure of our customers (as demonstrated with an improved renewal rate).

Relative to our competition, we have more English speaking, college educated, and experienced field managers. We owe it to them to provide an opportunity to take on more, learn more and make more. Our field managers will be grateful to be contributing at a higher level, our customers will be well served, and Ruppert will be a stronger and more agile company as we move into the future.



## Clarifying Maternity Leave Benefits

Last year, we updated our maternity leave benefit. Now that we've had a few experiences with it, we wanted to tweak the language in the policy to make sure it is clear that new moms are paid 100% of their salary for a minimum of eight weeks. Other parts of the policy are summarized below.



### Ruppert's Maternity Leave Policy:

- Maternity leave is a type of short-term disability
- Mothers with over one year's service are eligible
- The company provides a minimum of eight weeks paid maternity leave, but start date and total length depend on condition and physician's diagnosis (up to 12 weeks)
- Paid maternity leave covers

100% of the employee's salary (a combination of Short Term Disability insurance and Ruppert maternity pay), starting on your first day out of office

- Additional unpaid leave for maternity may be available under FMLA or other local laws
- Paid time off (sick and/or vacation) may be used for unpaid portions of maternity leave
- In case of an adoption, the company grants eight weeks of paid maternity leave to mothers with over one year of service

We hope that this new policy allows mothers to spend more time at home with a new baby without worrying about loss of pay or waiting for short-term disability checks to arrive. For more information on Ruppert's maternity leave policy or other company benefits, please contact Payroll Manager Tina Holt at [tholt@ruppertcompanies.com](mailto:tholt@ruppertcompanies.com).

## The Evolution of Hardwood Mulch *Continued from page 2*

### The Resulting Problem

While the quality of mulch has drastically changed, its popularity in the marketplace has skyrocketed. The perceived value and purpose of mulching today is largely for aesthetics. There has been a complete shift from bark to largely composted green waste and processed wood mulch, which has a slower rate of decomposition. In addition, commercial contracts routinely call for one or more annual applications of two inches or more of fresh mulch, without regard to the amount of mulch already present. This has resulted in an epidemic of over-mulched landscapes that pose a serious health risk to plants.

### The Solution

The only course of action is to remove the current excess mulch and limit the total amount of new mulch and existing mulch to no more than four inches.

- De-mulching should be performed for all trees that have a buried root flare (trees in beds are not exempt from this process)
- Original planting soil rings should be removed two to three years after the initial planting
- De-mulching is likely to be needed as a function of routine maintenance every five to seven years on average when annual mulching is a customer expectation and requirement. Given that today's

mulch takes significantly longer to decompose, build-up of mulch will occur sooner and must be removed even more frequently in the future.

If addressed in time, declining trees will recover. Based on the severity of decline, trees may need monitoring and supplemental care.

When applying new hardwood mulch, **Ruppert uses only mulch manufactured from virgin material, meaning its original use is as mulch, not processed wood or construction debris that likely contains nails and other contaminants. Our suppliers are certified by The Mulch & Soil Council ([mulchandsoilcouncil.org](http://mulchandsoilcouncil.org)).** For more information on our mulching practices, contact your area manager.



## Safety Spotlight

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include pain, swelling, and limited movement around the joints in your wrists, ankles, and knees.

### ■ Know what to do in case of an injury:

Follow our workplace guidelines and policies:

- In case of a life-threatening emergency, call 911.
- Report an injury immediately to your supervisor.
- Your supervisor should then call our 24-7 injury hotline (Dr. Blink) for initial evaluation of the injury to ensure proper first aid and treatment.

For many minor injuries, such as a simple strain, immediate treatment using rest, ice, compression, and elevation may be all that is needed. With proper aftercare, you can minimize the chance of permanent damage and reduce potential complications.



The key to preventing strains and sprains is mindfulness. Be aware of your surroundings and do not be embarrassed to ask for help or to apply an abundance of caution—your safety and wellbeing are always a priority. We can't prevent all injuries in the workplace, but by following precautionary measures we can greatly reduce them.

## Timing is Everything

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potential site hazards and any pre-existing damage, and develop an operational plan based on customer expectations and level of service requirements.

- **Snow Staking** – Identifying where snow stakes will be needed to eliminate/minimize damages and to properly identify potential hazards.
- **Staging of Equipment & Material** – Ensuring resources are placed in the ideal location to allow for the delivery of services during an event.
- **Classroom & Hands-on Training** – Educating our team related to all aspects that go into preparing and executing for a snow event.

- **Procurement of Materials & Equipment** – Material and equipment vendors have lead times and a certain amount of capacity. Ensuring we have secured the right amount of equipment and materials is critical to our ability to provide the best service. Purchasing these items early or committing to certain quantities allows us to negotiate the best possible pricing, which

translates into the best pricing for our customers.

- **Capacity** – Every company has a limit to the amount of properties that they can provide service to with their current staff and equipment inventory. When ample time is provided, capacity can be increased to handle more sites through increased staffing, securing additional equipment, and engaging service partners.

**The time is now!** If you are not already in the contract negotiation process, please contact your area manager so that they can schedule a walk-through and help build a custom snow and ice contract that's ideal for your property. For new customers, please contact Josh Nichols at [jnichols@ruppertcompanies.com](mailto:jnichols@ruppertcompanies.com).





# Meet the New and Improved IT Team

By **Dan Spruill**, Director of IT



Over the last four years, the IT Team has undergone several personnel changes with the goal of better supporting operations through increased capabilities and

skillsets. This past month, we continued that effort by hiring a new digital project manager, software developer, and help desk lead. With these additions, we are greatly enhancing our ability to provide better communication, awareness, and service to our internal customers.

In the spirit of increased visibility, we'd like to introduce (or re-introduce) our IT team:

■ **Courtney Pohlit**, our new digital project manager, will oversee all major IT projects going forward. She is currently tasked with getting her arms around our existing initiatives, then working to align resources and

help deliver solutions on time and under budget.

■ **James Mu**, our new software developer, is busy learning our extensive list of custom software, which he'll be responsible for maintaining and updating. Both he and Courtney will work to add functionality and create new applications to continue providing a competitive advantage to operations.

■ **Rad Petkov**, our new help desk lead, will be the first point of contact when you experience any IT issues. Anything he cannot solve quickly on his own (which is very little), he will escalate to one of our more seasoned team members (below).

■ **Casey Mills**, prior to his promotion to network administrator, held Rad's role as help desk lead. Now, he manages our extensive list of network equipment including servers, firewalls, access points, and switches.

■ **Tim Vo**, our senior systems engineer, focuses on our IT security footprint

and manages our infrastructure applications.

■ **Melanie Halsey**, our longest tenured team member, has held several positions within Ruppert. She is instrumental in helping us roll out new applications and currently oversees our mobile device program, including all cell phones and tablets with data plans.

Courtney, Rad and James are very welcome additions to our team. They have already hit the ground running and we expect they will quickly ramp up their knowledge of our Ruppert systems. We are excited to take this team into the second half of 2019.

If you are in need of IT support, please submit a ticket through the KACE system ([support.ruppertcompanies.com](https://support.ruppertcompanies.com)), or email [support@ruppertcompanies.com](mailto:support@ruppertcompanies.com). We look forward to assisting you!



Pictured L to R: James Mu, Rad Petkov, Courtney Pohlit, Melanie Halsey, Tim Vo, Dan Spruill, Casey Mills



## DISCOUNT

As part of our maintenance contract with Six Flags America in Bowie, MD, our employees are eligible for significant savings off the main gate price. To purchase tickets at the discounted price, visit [sixflags.com/PartnerLogin](https://sixflags.com/PartnerLogin), then log into the site with the username **RUPLANDAM** and password **Sixflags6**. This also allows you to "print and go," so you have your ticket in hand when you get to the park with no waiting in the line to purchase tickets.





## Customized Vehicle for Downtown Areas

By Greg Franklin, Director of Fleet and Facilities



Operating in metropolitan areas can present plenty of opportunities, but it also comes with plenty of challenges. Particularly in our D.C. landscape management branch, we

are continually fighting the logistics of parking, tight one-way streets and battling traffic in a truck and trailer combo measuring almost 50 ft in length.

To address these challenges, we recently acquired our first production van to serve the D.C. market. While it cannot fit the full inventory needed to equip a six-man crew, this down-sized version of our typical truck and trailer combo can fit up to two large mowers and is designed to be a specialty horticulture van serving small (mainly turf) job sites in the city.

While we certainly aren't the first landscape company to use this type of vehicle, a lot of thought went into customizing the buildout to make it as efficient as possible for our crews. Our vendor partner had built similar vans for other companies, however we made some strategic decisions to fit our specific needs:

- We eliminated a second row of seats to increase the cargo room without extending the back of the van (to address the tight parking areas)
- We created three seats in the front row to allow flexibility in crew size
- We made a conscious effort to duplicate our trailer setup as much as possible with the idea of keeping our model consistent throughout our fleet

- The rear doors were replaced with a full-size ramp to allow easy access and for loading large equipment
- The sides of the van were reinforced with stainless steel to minimize body damage, and the flooring was chosen for its durability



This custom van will allow us to get to our job sites more quickly and efficiently, offer lower fuel consumption, and will help reduce injury and accident rates, which will result in a cost savings that we hope to ultimately pass on to the customer.

While this is just the first iteration, we have received very positive feedback from the D.C. branch so far. Based on their experience, we will make any necessary improvements and potentially make this model available to other branches serving metropolitan areas. As always, we continue to look for opportunities to keep innovation at the forefront of our business and find solutions to best serve our customers.

### Branch Abbreviations

<b>ALM</b>	Alexandria Maintenance (VA)
<b>BAM</b>	Baltimore Maintenance (MD)
<b>CAM</b>	Camp Hill Maintenance (PA)
<b>CHM</b>	Charlotte Maintenance (NC)
<b>CORP</b>	Corporate Office (MD)
<b>DCM</b>	D.C. Maintenance (DC)
<b>FBM</b>	Fredericksburg Maintenance (VA)
<b>FOM</b>	Forestville Maintenance (MD)
<b>FRM</b>	Frederick Maintenance (MD)
<b>GAL</b>	Georgia Landscape (GA)
<b>GVM</b>	Gainesville Maintenance (VA)
<b>KIM</b>	King of Prussia Maintenance (PA)
<b>LAM</b>	Laytonsville Maintenance (MD)
<b>LIM</b>	Lilburn Maintenance (GA)
<b>MAM</b>	Mableton Maintenance (GA)
<b>MDL</b>	Maryland Landscape (MD)
<b>NLB</b>	National Landscape (MD)
<b>NCL</b>	North Carolina Landscape (NC)
<b>RAM</b>	Raleigh Maintenance (NC)
<b>RIM</b>	Richmond Maintenance (VA)
<b>RSM</b>	Richmond South Maintenance (VA)
<b>TOM</b>	Toughkenamon Maintenance (PA)
<b>TXL</b>	Texas Landscape (TX)
<b>VAL</b>	Virginia Landscape (VA)
<b>WHM</b>	White Marsh Maintenance (MD)



# Putting Down Roots in Texas

**R**uppert Landscape has put down roots in the Houston market with the purchase of a five-acre property in Spring, Texas. This new facility, located just a half-hour north of downtown Houston, will enable the branch to continue to grow its team to take on large-scale commercial landscape construction contracts in the region. In addition, this presents the opportunity for the company to expand its service offerings in the region to include landscape management.

We have frequently stepped out of our geographic footprint when opportunities arise to take on large-scale landscape construction projects at a national level. Our first foray into the Texas market was a \$1.9M landscape and irrigation contract for Texas City Outlet Mall, which was completed in 2012. The success of this and several subsequent projects, including ExxonMobil headquarters, Baybrook Mall, and River Oaks District, enabled us to develop a more permanent presence in Houston.

In 2016, we formalized the Houston branch (converting it from a satellite operation), giving us a permanent location

from which to continue building ties to the Houston market. At the time, the full-time staff consisted of 10 employees. Three years later, the team has relocated to accommodate a team of 57. Plans to expand local service offerings to include landscape management would enable the company to add another 50+ employees to the team.

Ruppert is currently working on several projects in the region, including Capitol Tower and the Holocaust Museum, with upcoming projects including the Houston Museum of Fine Arts Kinder Exhibit and Rothko Chapel.

The Texas landscape construction branch is overseen by Branch Manager Jack Jones. He notes, "The team is very talented and eager to take on the complex and challenging projects that come our way." Remarking on the market's potential, he says, "Houston is the fourth largest market in the country and has a strong economy and diverse culture. We are looking forward to continuing to build our team and tapping into the skilled and engaged workforce that this community has to offer."







# New Contracts

In our various markets along the East Coast and in Texas, our landscape construction division has been tapped to deliver a number of new projects, including:

## American Airlines Campus Mobility

**Location:** Fort Worth, TX

**Project Description:** Part of the overall reshaping and development of the American Airlines campus, this project focuses on the green space of the 300-acre campus and the connectivity between the new office buildings and parking garages. The mobility plan has a very high focus on employees walking and biking throughout the campus as opposed to relying on vehicular traffic.

**Client:** Holder Construction

**Owners Rep:** Pritchard Associates

**Owner:** American Airlines

**Landscape Architect:** The Office of James Burnett

**Ruppert's Scope of Work:** Landscape, Irrigation, Soil, Pavers, Drainage, Stone and Boulder installation, Site Furnishings, Reforestation

**Estimated Completion Date:** January 2020



*Photo courtesy of The Office of James Burnett*

## The Yards Parcel L

**Location:** Washington, DC

**Project Description:** The Yards Parcel L will be a 270+ unit apartment building with approximately 17,000 SF of retail space on the block along 3rd Street South of Tingey.

**Client:** John Moriarty & Associates

**Owner:** Brookfield Properties

**Landscape Architect:** MPFP

**Ruppert's Scope of Work:** Landscape, Irrigation, Earthwork, Drainage, Concrete Flatwork, Site Amenities

**Estimated Completion Date:** Fall 2019



*Photo courtesy of JDLand.com*

## National Air & Space Museum

**Location:** Washington, DC

**Project Description:** This joint venture will be the first major renovation of the museum in 40 years and will take place over a six-year period to keep major portions of the facility open to the public at all times. Ruppert has previously worked with Clark and Smoot on projects for the Smithsonian—most recently, on the National Museum of African American History and culture.

**Client:** Clark Construction, Smoot Construction, and Consigli Construction Company

**Owner:** The Smithsonian Institution

**Landscape Architect:** Quinn Evans Architects

**Ruppert's Scope of Work:** Landscape, Irrigation, Earthwork, Drainage, Concrete Flatwork, Site Amenities, Arboriculture

**Estimated Completion Date:** January 2025



*Photo courtesy of The Smithsonian Institution*

## Parmer Amenity

**Location:** Durham, NC

**Project Description:** In the heart of Research Triangle Park, one of the most prominent research parks in the world, Parmer RTP is a premier R&D campus with 20 separate buildings of state-of-the-art office and laboratory spaces for lease. The 500-acre campus includes an outdoor amphitheater, fitness trails, bike share program, tennis courts, outdoor gathering areas, and space for daily food truck rallies, with more amenities on the way.

**Client:** McDonald York Building Company

**Owner:** Karlin Real Estate

**Landscape Architect:** O'Brien Atkins

**Ruppert's Scope of Work:** Soils, Plants, Irrigation, Pavers, Synthetic Turf, Bocce Court

**Estimated Completion Date:** Fall 2019



*Photo courtesy of Jay Smith at OBA*

## Paul VI Catholic High School

**Location:** Fairfax, VA

**Project Description:** Sitting on a 68-acre property, the new campus of Paul VI Catholic High School was designed to feel like a college campus and will feature an academic zone towards the front of the site, as well as an athletic wing, stadium zone, and athletic field zone.

**Client:** Whiting-Turner

**Owner:** Catholic Diocese of Arlington

**Landscape Architect:** JJM Design

**Ruppert's Scope of Work:** Landscape, Earthwork, Drainage, Site Amenities

**Estimated Completion Date:** Fall 2019



*Photo courtesy of VMDO*

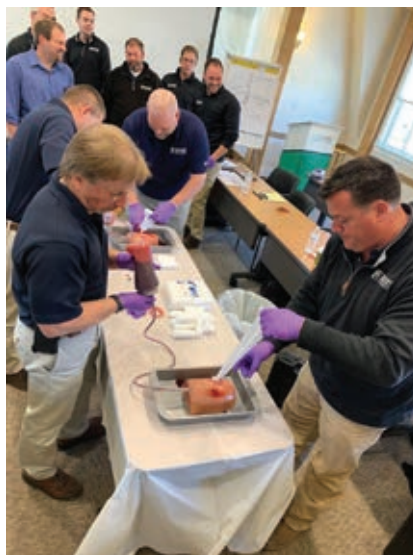
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# Employee Development

Throughout mowing season, each of our maintenance branches held a “mower rodeo”—a training event during which they demonstrate the proper maintenance and application of various landscaping equipment, incorporating safety and training, friendly competition and employee appreciation.



Our **Safety Committee** convened at our corporate campus on April 3rd for their quarterly meeting to review and learn new safety procedures, including an interactive bleeding control training.



Our **shop managers** held their quarterly fleet meeting on May 15th to review standards and procedures and learn new tools and techniques to keep our operations teams fully equipped.







## Appreciate and Celebrate

Congratulations to our Enhancement Sales Contest winners: **Jeff Sosa (RAM)** (left) for February and **Drew Dummann (RAM)** (right) for March. Enhancement sales are critical to our success because our customers routinely state that a key way we can improve is by being more proactive in suggesting ways they can better maintain and improve their property. Our enhancement sales recognition contest awards each month's top performer with an engraved silver coin to be displayed in the branch (and one to keep) as well as a small bonus and company-wide recognition.



**Toughkenamon maintenance** branch sponsored **Apolinar Aguilar** to run the 2019 Delaware Half Marathon on April 28th. Apolinar finished 142nd place out of 785 runners.



The **accounting** team took a well-deserved break for their annual outing on April 5th where they toured The Collection, a nearly finished job site in Bethesda, MD, and had some fun team building at the Rockville Escape Room.



Our **Georgia landscape** team took some time to relax and bond with an employee appreciation BBQ on Friday, April 26th.





## Community Service



On March 29th, members of our **Virginia landscape** branch partnered with HeroHomes to donate and install landscaping for a wounded veteran and his family. Based in Loudoun County, Virginia, HeroHomes is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing permanent housing for wounded veterans.

On April 6th, our **Texas landscape** team had the opportunity to take part in Rebuilding Together Houston's latest volunteer project, where they mowed the lawn, trimmed and pruned bushes and removed overgrown plants. It was a pleasure to work alongside volunteers from other local businesses to renovate the property for a deserving local resident.



On April 27th, members of our **King of Prussia maintenance** branch participated in a BOMA Philadelphia Volunteer Day to renovate the Police Athletic League (PAL) of Philadelphia's North Penn Center. The landscape renovation included tree pruning, removal of dead trees and installing three Crepe Myrtles; creating a raised vegetable garden; creating three plant beds and installing perennials; and installing seasonal color.

Our **Virginia landscape** team partnered with Washington Building Congress members to participate in the annual Rebuilding Together National Workday on April 27th, in Burke, VA. Work on the property included chimney repairs, installation of grab bars, replacing the front entrance stairs and driveway, and extensive bamboo cleanup/landscaping.







## Major Milestones

*A hearty congratulations and best wishes to:*

### JUST MARRIED



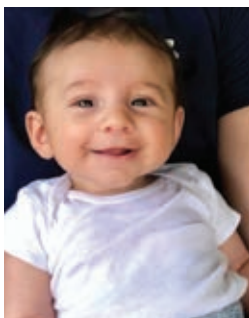
**Kyle Meissner (FOM)** and **Shannon Freeze (PROP)**, were married on May 2nd.



**Craig** and **Pat Ruppert** welcomed their 9th grandchild, Everett Boyle, on June 13th, born to daughter Julie and son-in-law Connor.

### PROUD PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS

**Jay Long (CORP)** and his wife, Patty, welcomed their first grandchild, Jude Patrick White, on April 2nd, born to daughter Maggie and son-in-law Justin.



**Josh Nuckols (RIM)** and his wife, Brandi Nuckols, welcomed a girl, Delaney Belle Nuckols, on February 8th.

**Rad Petkov (CORP-IT)** and his wife, Maya, welcomed a girl, Nora Petkov, on May 17th.



### OVERACHIEVERS

**Jimena Alfaro (LAM)** earned her bachelor's degree in Criminology from the University of Maryland.



**Stephanie Whealton (CORP-HR)** earned a certificate in Level One Instructional Design from Langevin Learning Services.



## New Contracts

*Continued from page 11*

### River Oaks Baptist Middle School

**Location:** Houston, TX

**Project Description:** This \$65 million campus expansion project includes 166,000 SF of classroom space (roughly doubling in size) and a 150-space underground garage.

**Client:** WS Bellows Construction Corporation

**Owner:** River Oaks Baptist Church

**Landscape Architect:** TBG Partners

**Ruppert's Scope of Work:** Landscape, Irrigation, Ground Pavers

**Estimated Completion Date:** Spring 2020



*Photo courtesy of Jackson & Ryan Architects*



## SAVE THE DATE

**The Ruppert company picnic**

will be held on

**Saturday, September 14th**

at

**Fall Creek Farm**

(Ruppert Nurseries campus) in Laytonsville, MD.

Invitations to follow.

**Mark your calendars!**





## Movin' On Up



**Rickey Ackerman (GAL)** was promoted from business dev. to project mgr.



**Nicolas Avila (TOM)** was promoted from crew member to asst. field mgr.



**James Boatright (GAL)** was promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.



**Jaime Lara (TOM)** was promoted from crew member to asst. field mgr.



**Vance Pennington (TOM)** was promoted from field mgr. to area mgr.



**Patty Pescrille (CORP-MAINT)** was promoted from Bus. Dev. (LAM) to Reg. Business Dev.



**McKenna Salmon (GAL)** was promoted from asst. field mgr. to field mgr.



**Payton Zudal** was promoted from asst. branch admin (FRM) to acct. payable specialist (CORP-ACCT).



**Victoria Attwood (CORP-ACCT)** transferred from AP specialist to AR specialist.



**Krystyn Elmore** transferred from AP specialist (CORP-ACCT) to division admin. asst. (CORP-LAND)



**Emil Saweros (CORP-MAINT)** transferred from IT to the maintenance division as software director

## Career Opportunities

For information about current career opportunities at Ruppert Landscape, please visit us at

[www.ruppertlandscape.com/careers](http://www.ruppertlandscape.com/careers)

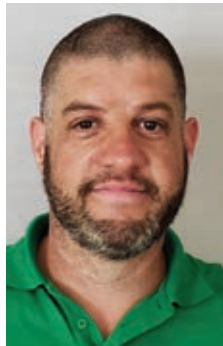


## New Faces

*We welcome the following new employees to Ruppert's growing ranks:*



**Jeff Bodine  
(LAM)**  
Asst. Field Manager



**Mike Florio  
(MAM)**  
Enh. Field Manager



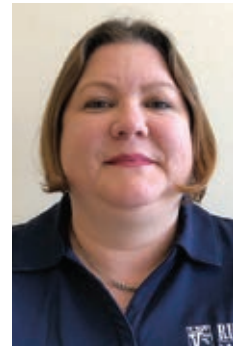
**Angela Gray  
(VAL)**  
Branch Admin.



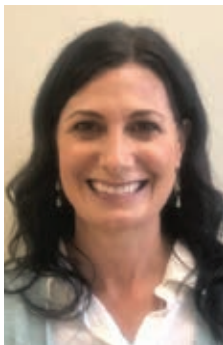
**Edward Green  
(TOM)**  
Asst. Field Manager



**Dan Howe  
(NCL)**  
Ops. Manager



**Heather Hughes  
(VAL)**  
Asst. Project Manager



**Anne Kawecki  
(VAL)**  
Asst. Project Manager



**Brian Lattimore  
(NCL)**  
Field Manager



**Tim McCotter  
(GVM)**  
Field Manager



**James Mu  
(CORP-IT)**  
Software Developer



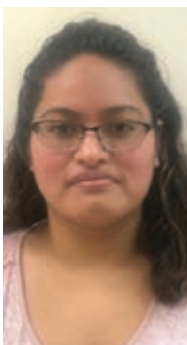
**Ivan Nikolov  
(DCM)**  
Shop Mechanic



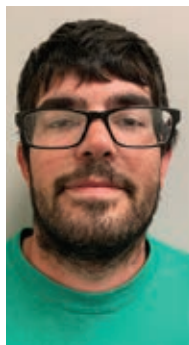
**Rad Petkov  
(CORP-IT)**  
Help Desk Lead



**Courtney Pohlit  
(CORP-IT)**  
Digital Project Mgr.



**Teresa Robles  
(VAL)**  
Estimator



**Adam Sarantinos  
(LAM)**  
Asst. Field Mgr.



**Scott Schoffstall  
(CORP-MAINT)**  
Reg. Irrigation Mgr.



**Janelle Stewart  
(VAL)**  
Estimator



**Chase Townshend  
(RSM)**  
Area Mgr.



**Jacob Williams  
(VAL)**  
Asst. Project Mgr.

**And welcome to our new and returning crew members!**