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February 1993

Thank You -

- for taking the time to review the enclosed press kit and for your previous coverage.

In the past, Ruppert Landscape Company has been a credible source of information regarding the green industry, the landscape aspects of commercial construction, environmental issues and management techniques. In the future, we are committed to providing you with more of the same.

In an economy where small contractors are finding it hard to survive, Ruppert Landscape Company has continued to grow. We are not a corporate giant, just a company of professionals working together to make our mark and to do it successfully.

Our most current release on that subject is just inside...

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RUPPERT
LANDSCAPE . INC.

COMPANY PROFILE

In forming Ruppert Landscape Company and Ruppert Nurseries, Craig Ruppert has broken some of the typical management rules, the foremost perhaps being "Never go into business with your family", closely followed by "Never be friends with those that work for you."

At 18, Craig invested in one lawnmower, took over his parents garage and began a side-business of lawn maintenance. Soon after, he hired his older brother Chris as the first full-time employee of Ruppert Lawn Service. Eighteen years and several locations later, this "pay at the end of the day" operation has become a multi-million dollar entity with three locations, satellite offices, seven branches, and has changed the face of the landscape industry in Washington, D.C. Ruppert Landscape Company has been ranked sixth in the nation by **Landscape Management** Magazine.

Ruppert Nurseries came into being in 1990, when Craig took advantage of a private offering and purchased the equipment, field inventory and nurseries associated with the offer.

THE MOTIVATION.

Chris Davitt, vice president of Ruppert Landscape and close friend of Craig says, "No matter where he is, a fast food restaurant or a corporate headquarter, Craig Ruppert watches the system. He questions what makes it work, what makes it fail, how it can be improved upon. He is most interested in systems that involve people - the basis of any service organization - and this is where his management talent lies. Many of the people that work here are here for one reason - they like Craig Ruppert. Craig shares the vision clearly and as far down the line as possible. Everyone is exposed to financial decisions. There are no secrets. Big decisions are usually shared by a group of people and employees are given as much responsibility as they can handle. This may not seem innovative, but to the extent that it is practiced in the Ruppert companies, I believe it is."

Craig agrees and adds, "We have remained focused and stayed with the business that we have started in. We haven't gotten excited about all the opportunities that presented themselves. We have survived because we *wanted* to. There was always a desire to grow; now it is a responsibility. To our employees, to our customers."

THE SUCCESS.

The physical side of the companies successes include branch offices in Ashton, MD, Chantilly, VA, Clinton, MD and Atlanta, GA (Ruppert Landscape) and the Ashton, Olney and Sunshine, MD locations of Ruppert Nurseries. It also includes a profitable financial history (never a deficit year), a large fleet of vehicles and equipment, a combined payroll of over 300 employees, a slew of local and national awards, and the "lion's share" of high profile projects and office parks in the D.C. metropolitan area.

The more subliminal side of success is found in the company philosophy, "To maintain a profitable company which provides growth opportunity for its employees and renders honest, high-quality service to its clients." This is backed up by clean trucks and talented employees with an unmatched dedication and loyalty. Many have been with the company five to ten years - rare in an industry known for high turnover. In the upper levels of management, four of seven branch managers began as crewmen and are now responsible for branches with annual revenues of \$3 million each. All of this is reflected in service to the customers. For the past five years, the landscape management departments have each posted a 90% contract renewal rate, providing proof that the system works.

THE FUTURE.

Davitt sees the future as "the same place we were three, five and ten years ago...in the middle of an upward pattern. We're more mature and we're not doubling as fast, but we are definitely growing. We always have been, and always will be, very cautious about over-representing ourselves. Our marketing approach will continue to be one of attention to detail in both production and service. We will continue to live up to our mission statement, which calls for continued growth and people development."

Largest Landscapers In The Metro Area

Ranked by 1991 gross sales

Reprinted from issue of August 10, 1992

RANK	NAME/ADDRESS/PHONE	1991 GROSS SALES	1990 GROSS SALES	NO. OF PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 1991	THREE CURRENT PROJECTS	LARGEST PROJECT TO DATE	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	PRESIDENT	YEAR ESTABLISHED
1.	MEADOWS FARMS INC. Route 1 Box 170 Chantilly, VA 22021 703-471-0606	\$18.5 million	\$18.0 million	1,600	Little Rocky Run HOA, Clipper Cay Condominiums	New Carrollton Metro Station	wnd	William J. Meadows	1972
2.	RUPPERT LANDSCAPE CO. INC. 17701 New Hampshire Avenue Ashton, MD 20861 301-774-0400	\$15.6 million	\$12.9 million	570	Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Silver Spring Metro Station, Russell Land Development	Avion Office Park	309	Craig A. Ruppert	1974
3.	CHAPEL VALLEY LANDSCAPE CO. 3275 Jennings Chapel Road P.O. Box 159 Woodbine, MD 21797 301-924-5400	\$8.9 million	\$10.5 million	wnd	Hirshhorn Museum, 2 Independence Building, Fair Lakes Park	Tyson's II shopping mall	125	J. Landon Reeve, IV	1968
4.	CREATIVE PLANTINGS INC. 16000 Columbia Pike Burlington, MD 20866 301-384-3800	\$8.5 million	\$7.9 million	110	MCI corporate headquarters, Montgomery Mall, Federal Judiciary Building	wnd	120	Robert T. Mangum	1968
	GREEN THUMB ENTERPRISES INC. Route 1, Box 200 Chantilly, VA 22021 703-471-5033	\$8.5 million	\$9.1 million	275	Office buildings at Fair Lakes, Cascades/Lowe's Island, Ashburn Village	The Cascades/Lowe's Island Community	225	M. Gerald Chauvin	1979
6.	BRICKMAN GROUP LTD. 7301 Cortlee Road Laurel, MD 20707 301-470-1844	\$8.2 million	\$7.9 million	wnd	wnd	wnd	250	Theodore Brickman	1939
7.	DENISON LANDSCAPING INC. 124 Pales Drive Fort Washington, MD 20744 301-567-0210	\$5.4 million	\$5.7 million	75	P.G. Metro Station, Arlington County, William Preston Bridge	St. Charles Town Center Mall	65	John P. Denison	1973
8.	NEKOOSA CONTRACTING CORP. P.O. Box 47009 Forestville, MD 20753 301-568-0621	\$3.7 million	\$2.3 million	22	Postal Square, Goddard/Bendix, Anacostia Metro Station	Georgetown University Law Center	25	Christopher N. Soussanin	1953
9.	J.H. BURTON & SONS INC. 5011 Laytonville Road Olney, MD 20832 301-948-7900	\$3.5 million	\$3.0 million	50	Hopewell Middle School, Silver Spring Parking Facility, First Korean Baptist Church	wnd	50-75 ¹	Mary Elen Burton	1927
10.	BOZZUTO LANDSCAPING CO. 15127 Marlboro Pike Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 301-627-6500	\$2.5 million	\$2.1 million	55	Hunters Glen, Silverbrook Farms, Beacon Place	Keswick Park	50	Thomas W. Davis	1979
11.	ROLLING GREENS INC. 112 N. Jefferson St. Falls Church, VA 22046 703-241-8800	\$2.4 million	\$2.2 million	60	Amazonia House at the National Zoo, Postal Square, Freddie Mac Headquarters	Galleria at Tysons II	50	Paul R. Levy	1975
12.	GARDEN GATE LANDSCAPING INC. ² 821 Norwood Road Silver Spring, MD 20905 301-924-4131	\$2 million	\$2 million	wnd	wnd	wnd	30-50 ¹	Charles W. Bowers, general manager	1964
13.	SUNSET HILLS FOLIAGE INC. P.O. Box 1392 Laurel, MD 20725 301-470-3443	\$2 million	\$1.9 million	wnd	wnd	wnd	42	Steven Katz	1975
14.	BLAKE LANDSCAPING INC. Route 1, Box 429 Leesburg, VA 22075 703-777-5596	\$1.9 million	\$1.6 million	90	British Aerospace-North American Headquarters, Lansdowne, Battlefield Shopping Center	British Aerospace- North American Headquarters	35	Ronald W. Blake	1951
15.	SCAPES INC. 457-B Carlisle Drive Herndon, VA 22070 703-742-9100	\$1.7 million	\$1.7 million	30	University of Defense at Fort McNair, Reston North Hills Streetscape, TRW-Federal Systems	Reston North Hills Streetscape	30	Steve Coffey	1977
16.	ROSETTA LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT 15909 Sycamore Lane Rockville, MD 20853 301-924-1432	\$1.6 million	\$1.6 million	wnd	The Forum, The Promenade, Saratoga	Ammendale Business Campus	50	John Poulos	1976
17.	JOHNSON'S LANDSCAPING SERVICE INC. 4340 Montgomery Avenue Bethesda, MD 20814 301-656-6414	\$1 million	\$1 million	185	wnd	wnd	35	James H. Johnson	1960
18.	POTOMAC VALLEY LANDSCAPING 9545 River Road Potomac, MD 20854 301-983-9203	\$900,000	\$925,000	125	wnd	wnd	15	Cliff Gaus	1962
19.	SMITH BROTHERS SERVICES 13938 Highland Road Clarksville, MD 21029 410-531-6770	\$745,000	\$735,000	100	Columbia Mall, Laurel City, Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital	National Security Agency	26	Steven W. Smith	1963

¹Number of employees varies depending on the season

²Strictly a residential landscaping firm

wnd-would not disclose

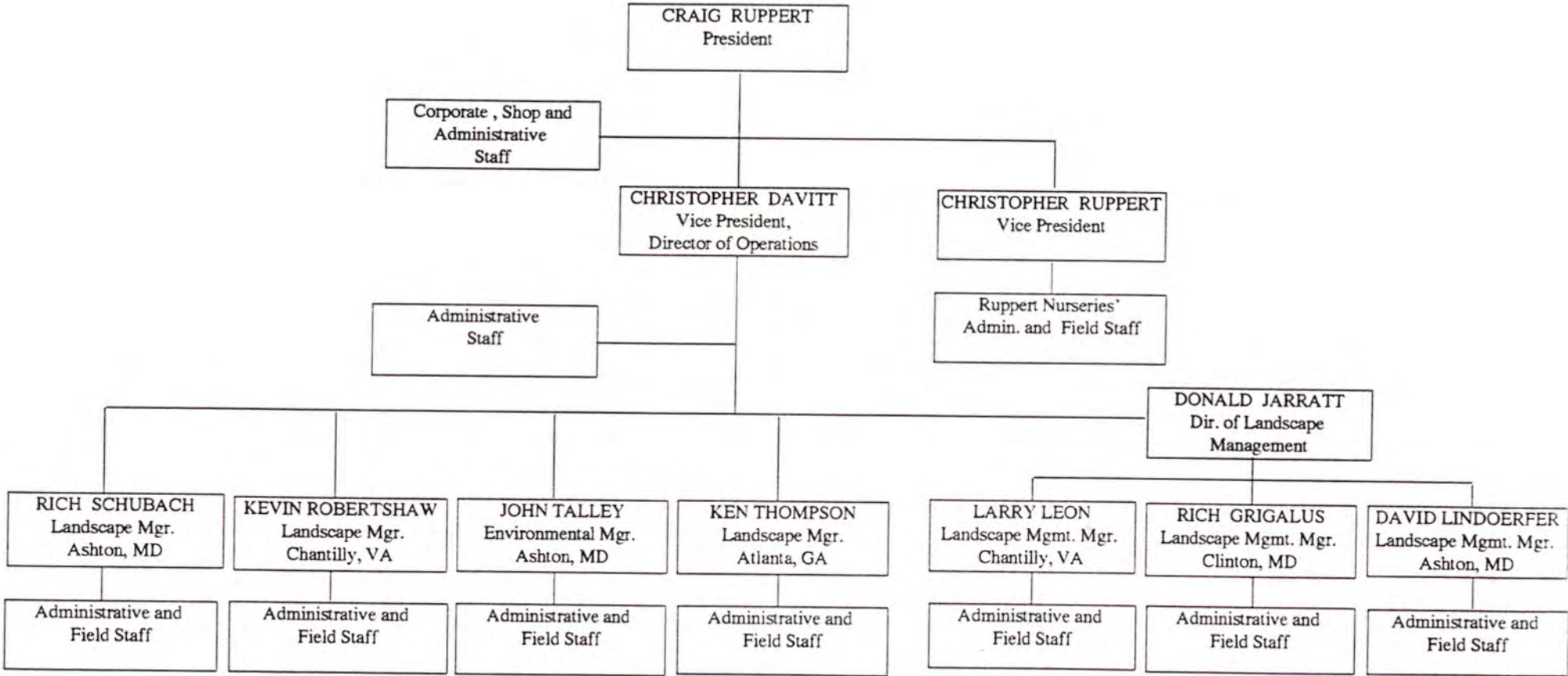
Source: Individual companies.

Lancaster Landscapes Inc., number one on the 1990 list, declined to disclose figures.

Researched by Julia Nasser

RUPPERT LANDSCAPE COMPANY, INC.

Corporate Structure



WHO ARE THE RUPPERT COMPANIES?

The Ruppert companies, which consist of Ruppert Landscape Company, Inc. and Ruppert Nurseries, Inc., are commercial green industry leaders both locally and nationally. They each have created an atmosphere of professionalism and excellence in customer service.

Ruppert Landscape Company

Ruppert Landscape has been ranked among the top ten commercial landscape contractors in the U.S. for the past three years and has made its mark on premier properties on the East Coast. Services, (detailed in the accompanying brochure), include landscape installation, landscape management, irrigation, environmental engineering and wetlands reclamation.

Ruppert Nurseries

Ruppert Nurseries owns and cares for over 130 acres of plant material in Maryland and specializes in large-caliper native and specimen trees. The nursery provides tree spade service, which figures prominently in transplanting large plant material and other practices which have gained importance during the present era of environmental-consciousness.

RUPPERT LANDSCAPE COMPANY, INC.

Contractors Qualification Statement

CORPORATE SUMMARY: Established in 1971 in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Incorporated on January 1, 1977 in the state of Maryland.

TYPE OF WORK: Landscape construction/installation, landscape management, irrigation design, construction and maintenance, wetlands reclamation.

CORPORATE POLICY: Ruppert Landscape Company, Inc. is committed to providing the highest quality landscape construction/installation and landscape management services available. The company has been built on the foundation of employee loyalty, superior job execution, and client satisfaction.

CORPORATE OFFICERS:

Craig A. Ruppert	<i>President</i>
Christopher A. Ruppert	<i>Vice President</i>
Christopher E. Davitt	<i>Vice President</i>
Kenneth A. Hochkeppel	<i>Director of Finance</i>
Donald Jarratt	<i>Director of Landscape Management</i>

BRANCH MANAGERS:

Dave Lindorfer	<i>Maryland Landscape Management</i>
Rich Schubach	<i>Maryland Landscape Installation</i>
Larry Leon	<i>Virginia Landscape Management</i>
Kevin Robertshaw	<i>Virginia Landscape Installation</i>
Rich Grigalus	<i>Prince George's Landscape Management</i>
John Talley	<i>Environmental Construction and Restoration</i>
Ken Thompson	<i>Atlanta Landscape Installation</i>

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES:

Peak of season: 325
Permanent: 150

FACILITIES:

Ashton, MD	10 acres
Gainesville, VA	5 acres
Prince George's County, MD	2 acres
Ruppert Nursery (three locations in MD)	130 acres

SAFETY PROGRAM

Company safety is continually emphasized through the following measures:

1. A five person in-house safety committee
2. Consultations with our insurance company on a monthly basis
3. Seminars specifically geared towards the topic of safety
4. Formal equipment training programs stressing safety for field personnel
5. Use of a company safety motto: "Safety keeps us growing."

TRADE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

American Association of Nurserymen (AAN)
Apartment and Office Building Association (AOBA)
Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC)
Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA)
Community Association's Institute (CAI)
Landscape Contractors Association (LCA)
Maryland Nurserymen's Association (MNA)
Maryland Motor Truck Association (MMTA)
Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS)
Property Management Association (PMA)
Suburban Maryland Building Industry Association (SMBIA)
The Irrigation Association (IA)
Virginia Nurserymen's Association (VNA)

AWARDS

Ruppert Landscape Company has won over 40 local and national environmental awards in the past five years. Those awards have come from associations, state governments, and industry publications. The projects honored include the following:

National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial; Washington, D.C.

Commercial installation

Madison Place; Alexandria, VA

Commercial landscape management

Lakeview at Brokenland; Columbia, MD

Commercial landscape management

Centerpointe Office Park; Fairfax, VA

Commercial landscape management

National Catholic Conference of Bishops; Washington, D.C.

Commercial installation/management

Metro Park North; Gaithersburg, MD

Commercial landscape management

Jefferson Court; Washington, D.C.

Commercial installation

International Center; Washington, DC

Commercial landscape management

Lake Fairfax, Building #8; Reston, VA

Fast-track commercial installation/management

Avion Office Park; Chantilly, VA

Commercial installation/management

Washington Harbour; Washington, DC

Commercial landscape management

The Washingtonian Center; Gaithersburg, MD

Infrastructure craftsmanship/commercial installation/ commercial landscape management

Transpotomac Canal Center; Alexandria, VA

Commercial installation/management

Canadian Embassy Chancery; Washington, DC

Commercial installation/management

Dulles Technology Center; Reston, VA

Commercial landscape management

Rice Manor (Ruppert Cos. headquarters); Ashton, MD

Commercial landscape management

Pennsylvania Avenue; Washington, DC

Commercial landscape management

The Wetlands Planting at Baltimore Harbour; Baltimore, MD

Commercial installation

COMPANY RELATIONS WITH EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS

If the financial statement is looked at as the ultimate report card, then the Ruppert companies have been successful. The bottom line at Ruppert, however, contains more than numbers, it contains people. And keeping people, both employees and clients, is where the companies excel.

EMPLOYEES

Craig Ruppert is sincere when he says, "I have a deep-down, honest belief that people need to be happy and that the company needs to keep them happy." The ways he and his managers do so are the following:

- **Accountability.** There is a branch concept within the organization which basically recreates the original small company. Each branch manager is responsible for the financial success/failure of his branch, as well as all of the details involved in such a venture. The amount of the manager's salary is directly tied to the net profit made by the branch through an innovative bonus plan. From there, the chain of command continues throughout; at the base level, the crews report to the same customers, have budget hours to beat and report on their own performance. This system, now three years old, has fostered independence, given authority, and allowed the company to remain close to its clients as if it were a small operation.

- **Employee awards.** The companies have a combined annual banquet at which selected employees are honored for their contribution to the company. These employees gain recognition from their managers, their peers, and the local press. It is a policy of all managers to be generous with recognition throughout the year, both verbally and in writing.

- **Socialization.** All employees are on a first-name basis, including management. As a general rule, the companies do not entertain clients; they opt instead to hold employee functions such as appreciation BBQ's, family picnics, a Christmas party, breakfasts and group attendance to sporting events.

- **Communication.** Through weekly staff and branch meetings, monthly tailgate safety meetings, an employee-only newsletter, and monthly financial meetings, each employee is kept abreast of what is happening within their company. There is currently an English tutoring program in place for non-English speaking employees, and all employees are encouraged to learn enough Spanish to communicate with co-workers.

- **Training.** Seminars are held regularly on topics ranging from sales techniques to small engine repair. These events are led both by in-house staff and by outside consultants. In addition, an annual "Field Day" is hosted. This is an event where the company is divided into teams and employees partake in competitions which raise and evaluate their skill level. Also hosted is a Management Development Day, attended by every employee from the foreman level and above.

- **Education.** All employees are encouraged to seek further education and certifications and are compensated according to grade. A high percentage of field and office staff are degreed. Association seminars are brought to the attention of everyone and fees are paid in full by the companies.

- **Bonus plan.** The managers bonus plan at Ruppert Landscape is one-of-a-kind in the industry. Tied directly to the financial well-being of the branch, this plan can make up as much as 25% of a managers annual compensation. A variety of bonus and incentive plans exist for all levels of personnel.

- **Benefits.** Along with the standard employee benefits (medical, dental, etc.), the company participates in a profit-sharing plan and an employee assistance program.

COMPANY RELATIONS, cont'd.

CUSTOMERS

This section can be kept brief by stating a quote from Craig. "The way we treat our employees is the way our employees treat our customers."

Davitt, vice president, also has something to say. "We still think like a small company in that we are bound and determined to meet the customers needs. We never want to get outworked, so we do what has to be done. If that means more hours, more people, more effort, so be it. We are now at the point where we can start projecting clients needs before they even know they have them...that is what all of this has been about."

An abbreviated list of customer relations tools include:

- Professional, technically sound employees
- Clean, well-marked equipment
- Corporate stability and the reputation for efficient, high-quality service
- Surveys on quality and customer service including:
 - Daily satisfaction completion forms
 - Monthly in-house quality control reports
 - Bi-annual customer quality control reports
- Training on how to handle client concerns for both office and field staff
- Flexibility in our services to meet the clients needs
- A four color newsletter, featuring clients and their projects
- A list of criteria which dictates how often major clients should be seen and/or spoken to by someone in each level of management

MOUNT PLEASANT BULLETIN BOARD

A News Forum for the Mount Pleasant Community

Vol 4, No.7

JULY 24, 1992

Neighborhood Planning Council begins canvassing for fall elections

by Bonnie J. Cain, Adult Chair
NPC #8

During July and August teams of youth workers will canvas the neighborhoods of Washington, DC to explain the mission of the Neighborhood Planning Council (NPC) and advertise the November 7th NPC elections.

The NPC's boundaries are designated by District law. Each NPC practices participatory democracy as adults and youth make decisions about how a portion of federal and District monies are spent for recreational, educational, cul-

tural and economic development programs for youth.

Residents (no citizenship requirement) of the District ages 13 and older are eligible to vote as well as to participate in their area's NPC elections and meetings.

Each NPC decides how approximately \$58,000 is spent in their NPC annually. Youth and adults study the recreational and instructional needs of youth in their NPC, request proposals to fill these needs and then evaluate and select proposals from those submitted.

NPC elections will be held November at sites that will be announced.



NPC Ward 1 election canvassers Keisha Perkins, Jemela Wright, Gueris Rodriguez and Siria M. Olivo may show at your door to explain the NPC elections.

Lincoln Junior High named Turning Point School

by Jay Lichtenauer

Lincoln Junior High School, recently designated as a "Turning Point" school, has been the center of activities as Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly's Youth Initiative Office, Lincoln staff and designated contractors put the finishing touches on an innovative program to serve Lincoln's unique population. The details of what constitutes a "Turning Point School" will be revealed by Kelly on July 23-24 at Hart Junior High School at 601 Missouri Ave., SE.

According to Head of the Youth Initiative Office, David Temple, counselors will provide services in four areas: health, mental health, drug and substance abuse and pre-employment skills. These services will supplement Lincoln's on-going Programs. Counselors will be located inside Lincoln, but their services will be available to the entire community, not just the students.

"It is a pilot program. We'll take what works and stick with it and take what doesn't work and eliminate it," says Temple.

The Turning Point program at Lincoln will cost \$1.4 million per annum, according to Temple. This money will fund activities through the Departments of Education, Recreation and Parks, Human Services and the contractor, the Latin American Youth Center.

Lincoln, located at 16th and Irving Streets, NW, has a projected fall enrollment of 700 students. The student body is a cross-section of the surrounding neighborhoods, predominately African-American and Hispanic with immigrants from a variety of countries.

Dr. Emma Bonner has served as acting principal since January 1992 when Dr. Saxon resigned. The recruitment and selection process to choose a new principal is still open.

In Ward 8, Douglas Junior High School in Ward 8 will be the next "Turning Point" school. Evans and Hart Junior High Schools are scheduled to follow suit soon after Lincoln and Douglas.

"We hope to have every junior high school in D.C. a Turning Point school," says Temple.

According to a Lincoln administrator, the Mayor's idea of a "Turning Point" program came from physicist Fritiof Capra of University of California at Berkeley, author of the book titled, *The Turning Point - Science, Society, and the Rising Culture*.

La Polvosa — Mount Pleasant's Soccer field to be landscaped

Soccer teams asked to stay off the field for three weeks

by Bonnie J. Cain

Friday, July 24, Ruppert Landscaping, Inc., with the wild applause of community soccer players and the gratitude of the DC Department of Recreation and Parks, will sod and landscape the dusty, poorly-graded playing field at 16th and Lamont Streets, NW.

Three hundred workers from the firm will begin work at 6AM and will lay approximately 5,000 square yards of sod, plant pin oak shade trees, Japanese Zelkova street trees, 143 Siebold Euonymus 18 inch hedges and perennial flowers.

The cost to the city for the landscaping is "0." Ruppert Landscaping hosts an annual "Field Day" for its workers which features planting and landscaping contests as a method of improving skills and increasing morale.

This year, the 16th Street field was chosen by the Ashton, Maryland-based firm because about 60 of its workers are from the Mount Pleasant, Columbia Heights and Adams Morgan neighborhoods.

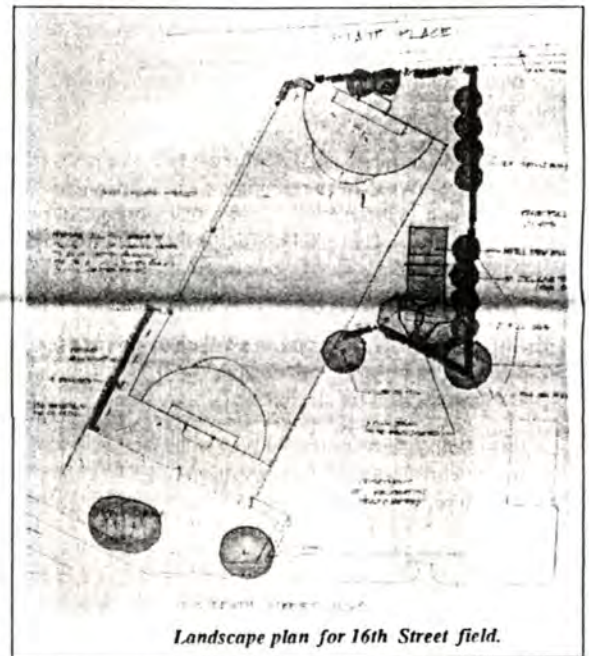
"It's really our way of saying thank you to our workers. The field means a lot to them," explained Chris Davitt, Vice President of Operations at Ruppert Landscaping.

Despite the heat and drought-like conditions of July in Washington, the Division Chief of the Parks Division believes that Recreation, with the help of community groups can get the sod to take hold. "It means a lot of watering and the promise of the community to stay off the field for three weeks, but I've made sod flourish in weather like this out at RFK Stadium. It can be done."

Both Recreation and Ruppert Landscaping stress that soccer players must voluntarily stay off the field for two weeks to give the grass time to establish. To determine if players, adult and youth would be willing to find other recreational sites for the required three weeks Carol Lowe, Acting Direc-

tor, Recreation, called a meeting of field users on July 14 at the Mount Pleasant Library. Unanimously and enthusiastically, leaders of adult soccer leagues, coaches from Bell Multicultural High School and Lincoln Junior High School, the Lin-

pecially the soccer leagues, feel that the field is theirs to play and to help maintain. "We welcome assistance in watering the field particularly on the weekends when our maintenance crews are off duty."



Landscape plan for 16th Street field.

coln-Powell Multicultural Recreation Center and Mount Pleasant Soccer pledged to cancel their activities or play on other fields.

"This is like a dream we've had for many, many moons," exclaimed one coach.

"We have a whole generation of kids who have holes in the knees from playing on that field," stated Jim Farrell of Mount Pleasant Soccer. "Of course, we want this grass in a big way."

Acting Director Lowe expressed her desire that the community, es-

The Parks Division is currently putting together a plan by which the watering apparatus can be accessed by community groups.

Recreation will run public service announcements on Radio Mundo and ask churches to urge their parishioners to help maintain the field.

The soccer field will be closed to public use beginning July 23 to permit preparatory work.

A re-opening ceremony is scheduled for Mid-August, when the field is expected to be ready for use.

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Next Edition Aug. 21
Call 232-5404 with
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NEWS

For release: For immediate release 2/93

RUPPERT LANDSCAPE COMPANY, INC. wins \$3.93 million Georgia DOT landscape project; to open branch office

ATLANTA, GA - In preparation for the onslaught of Olympic traffic, the Department of Transportation has awarded a \$3.93 million landscape project to Ruppert Landscape Company for environmental improvements in Clayton and Fulton Counties. The roadside enhancements will be prominent along Routes I-75 and 85/285 south of Hartsfield International Airport. The project is scheduled to begin the first week of February and will run through May 1996.

In this major planting, Ruppert Landscape Company will install 217,000 shrubs, 51,550 evergreens, 21,500 perennial plants, and nearly 4,000 trees of different varieties. The project will also include stream-channel clearing, rip-rap installation, topsoil replacement, and grass and wildflower seeding along 12 miles of roadway. Installation will be completed March 1994 and followed up with a two-year maintenance plan.

In order to facilitate the project, Ruppert, which is ranked as the largest commercial landscape contractor in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and among the top ten nationally, will open a branch office in the Atlanta area. The office will be led by Ken Thompson, a ten year veteran of the company and most recently the branch manager of Ruppert's Virginia landscape branch. The branch will focus on both landscape installation and landscape management.

-more-

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Ruppert Landscape/DOT, cont'd...

Brad Good, landscape architect on the project and a principal with Hughes, Good, O'Leary and Ryan notes that, "We've worked with Ruppert Landscape Company in the past and are confident in their skills and their professional approach to landscape contracting. We are fortunate to have several high-quality landscape contractors in the Atlanta region and they will be a welcome addition to the community."

Company president Craig A. Ruppert says that "this is a prime example of why the branch system works so successfully. Projects like this one help to build our organization and provide opportunities for our employees, as well as attract outside talent and enhance our ability to perform top-quality work."

Ruppert Landscape Company is a full-service landscape contractor specializing in commercial landscape installation, construction management, landscape management, irrigation and environmental restoration and construction. The company is headquartered in Ashton, MD with branch offices in Atlanta, GA, Clinton, MD, and Gainesville, VA and has received over 40 local and national awards for excellence in workmanship.

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RUPPERT REPORT

The Ruppert Report is published three times a year by Ruppert Landscape Company, Inc., an award-winning landscape contractor specializing in commercial installation, landscape management, and environmental concerns.

*Craig A. Ruppert,
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*For more information or additional copies of the **Report**, please call 301-774-0400.*

Environmental branch performs seven mile dune restoration

Ocean City, Maryland has a history of devastating storms including a 1933 hurricane and the virtual levelling of the city by a 1962 nor'easter. Almost thirty years later, in 1991, another series of brutal nor'easters took their toll. Not your ordinary landscape installation, the dune restoration project at Ocean City is designed to protect the oceanfront from these types of storms.

"One of the most exciting aspects of this project for me," admits environmental branch manager Ken Hochkeppel, "is from the management perspective. This project confirms the ABC's of a service-based operation. I am now positive that if employees are motivated, committed to customer service, and focused on innovative, efficient, quality production, the project will be successful . . . whether it's the

restoration of sand dunes, the installation of street trees, or the maintenance of an office complex." And — barring major storm activity — the dune restoration is well on its way to success.

Bruce Ware of the Army Corps of Engineers explains that restoration of the dunes is an environmentally-aesthetic protection feature. "Once established, the new dune (90' wide and 6-7' above the beach berm elevation) will provide a barrier against wave and high water damage and also provide a reservoir of beach sand during severe storms. Dune fencing and planting greatly assists in the stabilization of the dune line and captures windblown sand."

Ruppert Landscape's contract consists of the rebuilding of dunes and restoring of beaches which were destroyed last fall and winter. Working for the T.L. James Company, who has been contracted by the Army Corps of Engineers, Ruppert oversees the repair of decks, stairs, handrails and access ramps to the beach, the installation of 22 miles of sand fence, and the installation of 210 vehicle and pedestrian crossovers from the street-ends over the dune to the beach. The actual planting will

continued on next page



Sand dunes along the seven mile stretch of Ocean City shoreline are designed to take the brunt of a storm. Ruppert Landscape has been contracted to oversee the restoration process and provide beachgrass plantings.

The Washington Post

THURSDAY, JULY 23, 1992

Company to Bring New Life to Old Ball Field

By Shaun Sutner
Washington Post Staff Writer

A worn and neglected ball field in Northwest Washington that soccer enthusiasts fondly call the "the Dust Bowl" will get a free makeover worth \$35,000 tomorrow from a Maryland landscaping company that employs about 60 people who live near the field.

The barren dirt lot beside the headquarters of the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation at 16th and Lanont streets NW has become one of the city's most popular staging areas for soccer league play and pickup games.

Located in the heart of a neighborhood teeming with immigrants from Latin American countries, where soccer is extremely popular, the dusty expanse on the edge of Columbia Heights is used by an estimated 1,400 players and visitors a week from March to November, according to recreation department statistics.

But drug trafficking has competed with soccer at this tired street corner, and in recent years city officials have cut down what little beauty was there: several clumps of trees on the perimeter that parents complained were used by drug dealers to hide their wares.

"It's not safe and it's not adequate to play on," said Victor Molina, a physical education teacher and guidance counselor at nearby Bell Multicultural High School.

Enter Ruppert Landscape Inc., of Ashton, with an offer to spruce up "La Polvosa," or "dust bowl" in Spanish, after an acquaintance of company spokeswoman Kathleen Obenschain's told her about the sad old field and how important it is to the community.

"Sure, it's a small step," said Luis Vasquez, head of the D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force



BY HEATHER STONE—THE WASHINGTON POST

The shabby field is used by hundreds of children and adults in the largely Hispanic neighborhood.

that was formed after the May 1991 disturbances in Mount Pleasant. "But if the business community can get in and help out the Latino community, it's great."

The one-day transformation will begin at 6 a.m. tomorrow, when about 300 Ruppert workers will lay 5,000 square yards of sod and plant two oak trees, eight Japanese Zelkova trees, several flower beds and 143 18-inch hedge shoots.

All of the trees are thin-limbed varieties that will offer little hiding room, Obenschain said.

And the renovation will serve as the company's annual summer landscaping contest, usually held at the Ashton facility, where workers will compete in backhoe events and leaf blower obstacle courses before the sod goes down.

The only worry now is where all the soccer players will play during the three weeks Ruppert says the sod needs to take hold. City officials are suggesting the community park at Ontario and Adams Mill roads NW.

"It's wonderful these people came up with this idea," Molina said. "But we still don't know what we're going to do in the meantime."

No one can remember whether the half-century-old field was ever all grass.

Several attempts to seed it in recent years have been foiled by impatient players.

Recreation department officials say they have anticipated that problem by meeting with soccer league and community leaders beforehand and persuading them to

spread the word that the field is absolutely off-limits after the sod is down.

Also, signs advertising the restriction will go up tomorrow, and recreation officials in the building next door will monitor the site.

Obenschain said that her company, nearly half of whose work force of 300 is Hispanic, does about \$2.5 million a year in business in the District and that this is "a way to say thank you to that community."

But the project is a whole lot more to a lot of coaches and ball-players.

"Kids will be happy that their knees won't be scraped and cut," said Jim Farrell, founder of the Mount Pleasant youth soccer league. "And I won't have to listen to their cries as I pour antiseptic on their wounds."

13 is a lucky number

...at least for Ruppert Landscape Company of Ashton, Maryland. In 1989, a leading landscape magazine ranked the east coast firm the 13th largest landscape contracting company in the country.

by Cheri Baker

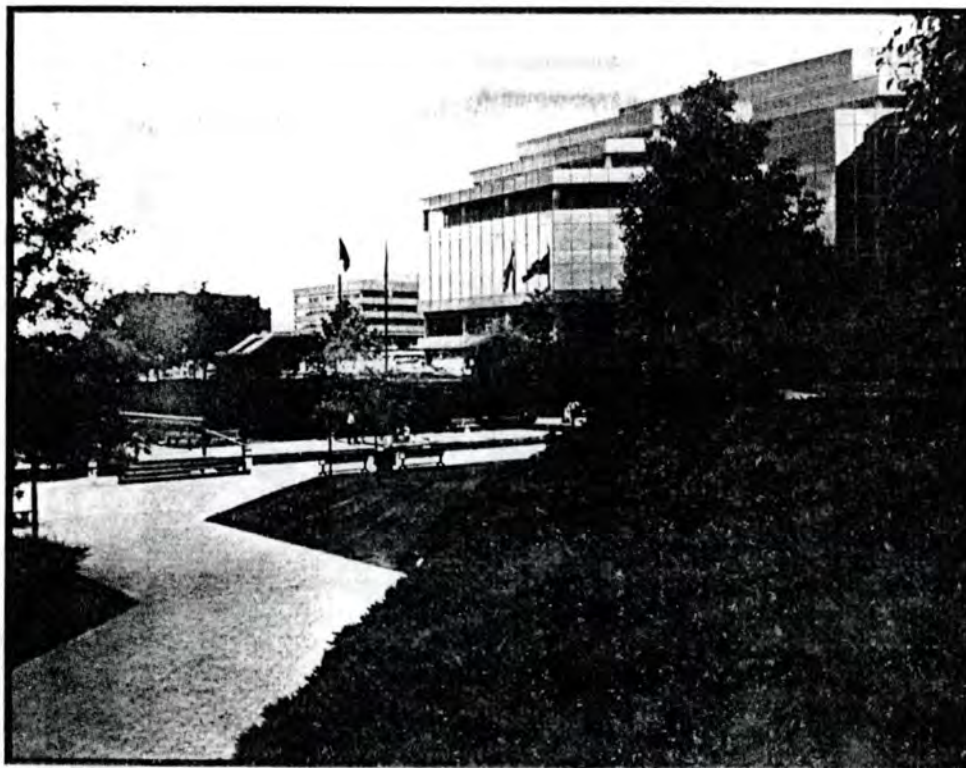
Two years later, Ruppert was ranked sixth nationally.



*(top photo)
Impeccable maintenance of landscapes at several historical sites has won Ruppert Landscape a national reputation for quality.*

*(bottom photo)
Ruppert headquarters, situated on an 11-acre estate in Ashton, Maryland*





The award-winning Transpotomac Canal Center project, situated on the Potomac River in Alexandria, Virginia.

He pauses frequently and at length. At times, you can see the thoughts racing through his mind. At others, one is shut out—forced to guess at the answer to come. Always, each word is measured and weighed.

Craig Ruppert is a bit of a dichotomy: he's a man whose favorite pastime is work, but calls himself "basically lazy". He's the ultimate conservative when it comes to an important business decision, but a "do it, and do it now" kind of guy in everyday matters. A company officer describes him as "breaking many of the basic rules of management", yet he is respected as a manager and a business mind. It's this mix of styles and attitudes that make Craig Ruppert not only a successful company owner and industry leader, but an admired employer as well.

His story is similar to that of so many others—with one difference. His "backyard lawn service" was ranked by *Landscape Management Magazine* in 1989 as the 13th largest landscape contracting firm in the country. According to Ruppert, the secret of his success is that it is not *his* success, but the success of those who make the company work.

This theory is backed up by an employee comment: "Craig asks you to do something, he very rarely tells you to do it. In addition, he somehow makes you agree that what you're doing is what you've wanted to do all along—whether it was or not."

This persuasive manner, coupled with a natural charm and an outstanding management team, is what has propelled Ruppert's company forward.

History

Ruppert was 17 years old when Ruppert Lawn Service was begun in 1971 in the family garage. What motivates a teenager to start a business? "My very first job was as a caddy," Ruppert explained, "and when a guy gave you 20 dollars, it was a thrill. It was more money than you'd ever had in your life. That's motivation—I enjoyed earning money."

Why lawns? "It was easy to start," Ruppert said. "It was there and available...I think I charged three dollars for Mrs. Echol's lawn." Although his motivation has changed, his enthusiasm has not.

Six years later, the fledgling com-

pany was incorporated and became Ruppert Landscape Company, Inc. Craig, then a vice president with a construction firm as his "regular" job, joined his brother Chris (who constituted the sales department) full time and the company forged ahead.

Today, Ruppert Landscape is situated on an 11-acre estate in Ashton, Maryland, and employs approximately 225 personnel during the peak season. Branch offices are located in Northern Virginia and Prince Georges County. Ruppert Landscape Company is primarily a commercial landscape contractor and specializes in landscape installation and construction, site development, landscape management and enhancement, irrigation, and wetland plantings.

Although considered a large company by most landscape industry standards, it is still run as tightly as possible. One of the few things that has changed over the past 13 years is Ruppert's reason for running the company. "All money is, is a measure of how well you manage," he pointed out. "It's a reward, but it's not the reason you do it.

"Why do I do what I do?" Ruppert reflected. "The most satisfying part...is to see the people develop. You build an organization that sticks together. The biggest reward for me is seeing that team stick together." He paused, then said "I want to make an impact...I find myself thinking, 'Are you doing all you can do? Can you do more to influence other people, make the world better, whatever...'"

The Projects

While it may not be exactly what he meant when Ruppert talked about making the world a better place, there have been several key projects in the course of his business life that have given direction to the company and its officers, while beautifying the surroundings as well.

Ruppert cites a 1983 municipal street tree planting project in Baltimore, Maryland, worth \$500,000 that "let us know we could compete with the big companies out there." From there, the company competitively bid for, and won, some of the Washington, D.C. area's most prestigious projects. Each

(continued on page 9)

Craig Ruppert

(continued from page 7)



Craig A. Ruppert, president, Ruppert Landscape Company (Photo by Barbara Glaeser)

job sharpened yet another skill of the company.

• **Pennsylvania Avenue**

Awarded the landscape management contract for Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue in the mid-1980s, Ruppert Landscape gained quite a bit of visibility for this job. The challenge was to provide impeccable maintenance on "America's Avenue" in the midst of incredible city and tourist traffic. This also was the first project that swept the landscape awards circuit, and generated a lot of interest in the company and the skills needed for a job of this nature.

• **The Wetlands at Baltimore Harbour**

This was one of those jobs that meant taking a chance. Persuaded to take the risk of learning something new by re-creating a natural wetland habitat that was destroyed during highway construction, Ruppert Landscape Com-

pany has since become known as a wetlands expert. In a time when government regulations are becoming increasingly tough on developers regarding tidal and non-tidal wetlands, this experience has proven invaluable.

• **Transpotomac Canal Center**

Built against the Potomac River in historic Alexandria, Virginia, this was the largest office park installation the company had attempted to date. Started in 1986, the project has since won awards for both landscape installation and landscape management.

Other landmark jobs have included the Canadian Embassy Chancery, Washington Harbour, and the Avion Office Park in Chantilly, Virginia.

The Team

Each project, no matter what size or challenge, receives the same attention

to detail. This means having qualified professionals to do the job. In this time when the service industry is facing a personnel crunch, Ruppert Landscape Company is doing its best to combat the odds.

Often called "the trio" by employees, Ruppert's top management team includes Ruppert and vice presidents Chris Ruppert and Chris Davitt. Ruppert describes this group as "a strong bunch of people. Our relationship is constantly changing. Every primary decision is kicked around together and we each play different roles."

No matter how the decisions are made, they are usually solid. "We are what we are because we've made a lot of good decisions on the way," Ruppert explained. "I think that will continue as we grow. The key to our growth is our people."

Employees are trained through in-house and association seminars that cover new developments as well as the basics. A large number of the field employees hold degrees in horticulture, and each branch of the company strives to have its employees certified in as many specialities as possible.

Employee incentives and special events are one way of "keeping the team together". After a particularly successful summer season in 1989, branch managers planned a Chesapeake Bay fishing trip for all field employees and the office staff that supported them. This is one area where Ruppert has led by example. "Although he demands excellence," states one employee, "he lets you know when you've done well." Having been on the receiving end of this policy, Ruppert's managers are better able to put this theory into practice themselves.

Although Craig Ruppert and Ruppert Landscape Company seem to lead a "charmed" life, it hasn't been due to luck. Again Ruppert stresses that it's the projects, the clients and the employees that are the perfect blend. His advice to industry newcomers? "Be conservative. Move slowly and wisely and things will begin to happen."

Cheri Baker is the public relations specialist for Ruppert Landscape Company in Ashton, Maryland.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Ruppert companies participates in many community and philanthropic events. Most recently, Ruppert Landscape Company has donated time and materials to the DC Department of Recreation and Parks, Lazarus House, a city homeless shelter and to Cloverly Elementary School, which has re-opened after several years of shutdown.

The companies have a vested interest in the future of the industry and in the communities in which employees work and live. They therefore take an inordinate amount of time to recruit employees from across the country and to promote the metropolitan region while doing so. In this effort, scholarships are offered at Montgomery Community College, Maryland and through the Landscape Contractors Association. Past scholarship programs sponsored by Ruppert have included SUNY @ Cobleskill, NY and Mississippi State University.

Support of community organizations include:

- The Bethesda Civitan Club
- Bethlehem House
- Camp Friendship/Carol Jean Cancer Foundation/Tom Sawyer Foundation, Inc.
- Christmas in April (sponsored by various building trades)
- Claude Moore Colonial Farm
- DC Department of Recreation and Parks
- Easter Seals
- Fraternal Order of Police
- International Union of Police Association
- Larry Dennis Scholarship Fund
- Leukemia Society of America
- Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
- Marylanders Against Handgun Abuse
- Montgomery General Hospital
- National Catholic Office for Persons with Disabilities
- The Olney Rotary Club
- Olney Theatre
- St. Francis Xavier Church
- St. John's High School
- Sherwood High School
- Samaritan Inn
- Sandy Spring Museum
- St. Anselm's Abbey High School
- Temporary Shelter of Arlington
- The Boy Scouts of America
- The Chesapeake Bay Fund
- The Pregnancy Aid Crisis Centers
- The YMCA
- Touchdown Club Charities
- Wynn for Congress