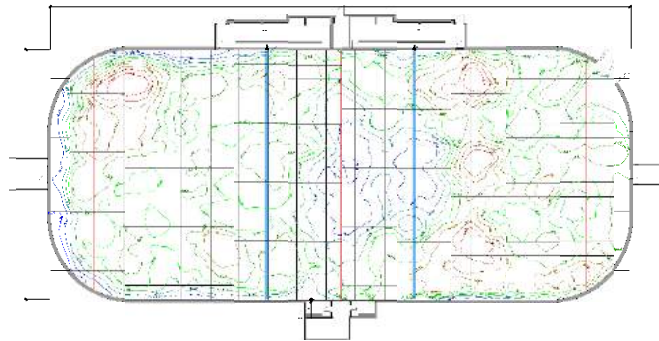




Summer 2019

How level is your slab?

By Eric Dursin



Elevation scan of the slab surface

With technology advancing rapidly in our industry, problems that we never imagined would impact our operation are now starting to come into light as we strive to provide our users with the best possible experience in our facilities. An example of this involves your rink slab and exactly how level, or not level, it is. During the New England rink boom in the 70's and 80's, the technology wasn't in place to pour a completely level slab. The advancement of products such as the Level Ice system on our ice resurfacer has taken the guesswork out of leveling the ice surface, but it also might have alerted you to how un-level your rink floor might be. If you can determine that your ice is level but you are getting different depth readings when you measure the ice, you might have an issue with your floor. Fortunately, there are some steps that you can take to first identify if your slab is uneven, and then to try and achieve uniformity.

Have a floor elevation scan performed. This will tell you where possible high or low spots are on your surface. A local construction or engineering company will be able to do this using their laser equipment and their mapping software. Typically it takes a few hours on-site on

(Continued on page 9)

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2019 Fall Conferences
Bentley U. - October 8th
Rochester - October 22nd
UPenn - November 5th

Mark your calendar!

NEISMA 2019-2020
 Membership Registration Form

Page 31

President's Message

by EJ Gottwald

Happy Summer! I hope each and every one of you are enjoying the start of summer and hopefully some much needed down -time. I know that for some of us summer can be a bit more hectic; with capital improvements, or those pesky projects we can only get done when ice is out or when the building is a bit quieter.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our outgoing President, Ben Ruggles, on a job well done. As our President for the past 4 years, Ben's dedication to not only NEISMA as an association but to our entire industry has been instrumental in forming new relationships and taking what we do to the next level. Under Ben's leadership NEISMA was the first organization to plan and execute a successful meeting of industry organizations within the United States and Canada. The North American Rink Summit was held in Lake Placid, NY. and hosted 2 representatives from 7 associations in one room to successfully discuss the

needs of our industry. This event was quite an accomplishment and has spawned further discussion to continue the Summit tradition bi-annually.

Ben's professional outlook and drive to continue to make NEISMA the best it can be has brought modernization to our registration software, making it more user friendly. We have added multiple pages to our quarterly publication known as the "Rink Rat" as well as converted it to be in full color. Under Ben's direction we took our spring conference and pushed the borders by adding classes from national associations while trying to keep the same feel with our regular seminars and speakers. These are just some of the accomplishments that Ben has made during his Presidency of NEISMA.

Ben has shown me what true leadership is and has been a fantastic mentor to me. I know without a doubt that he will continue to do so as I transition

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into this position and lead NEISMA. Please Join me in congratulating Ben on a job well done!

As we all know, summer seems to get past us way to quickly and before you know it, we are back in full swing. We have planned 3 Fall meetings this year throughout our region. It is our hope that you will be able to attend at least one, if not more. We are in the final stages of preparing the agenda for those events and plan to have specifics to our members by mid-July. Our conference committee, chaired by board member Eric Dursin, has been working hard the past few weeks to try and lock in location for next year's annual spring conference and trade show. If all goes well, we will be announcing the dates and location by August 1st!

We have some new contributors to the "Rink Rat"!!! If you are interested in having an article published, or have a staff member that would be interested, let us know as we are always interested in seeing what rinks are up to!

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Rink Rat and look forward to seeing you at one of our 3 upcoming fall meetings!!
Cheers,

OPENING for NEISMA Board Member

NEISMA presently has an opening on the Board of Directors for a non-voting member. This Director is one of two involved in all discussions and meetings but does not vote at BOD meetings. The position is for a member in good standing with the right level of experience who is willing to invest some time helping the organization through various assignments. This includes providing articles for The Rink Rat and serving on committees designated by the BOD President.

If you think this is something you would enjoy and can commit to, please forward a letter of interest, including a summary of your experience, to the chair of the nominating committee at Thomas.walsh.5@bc.edu no later than July 31, 2019.

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2019 NEISMA Conference Photos

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Backup Your Fleet

By Adam Busalacchi

It's Christmas in July for your facility when you are fortunate enough to receive a new ice resurfacer. If you're even luckier you could be in a position to keep the old resurfacer as a backup machine. For those who can afford this scenario, consider yourself lucky.

Regardless of the preventive maintenance we all should be implementing on our resurfacers, no machine is immune to a breakdown here or there.

Having a backup can help save lost ice time. However, it is important not to treat the backup as, well, just a backup. The better the condition the primary machine is in the more likely the operators will treat it with due respect. That does not mean neglect the old machine. The same care and preventative maintenance shown to the primary should also be afforded to the backup on a weekly basis. Use it! All staff should be comfortable in using the old machine in order to ensure a smooth transition while the primary is repaired. It is important to remember even when the primary machine is working perfectly, a weekly plan to keep the old machine in service should be implemented.

There is another upside to keeping a backup machine. A double machine resurface has many upsides that anyone can take advantage. Primarily seen in college and professional rinks as a way to keep on schedule with promotions, using two machines can help any arena that has the luxury to have one and afford the proper staffing levels. Aforementioned is the care needed to maintain the older machine. If operational it can serve to keep the arena's schedule on time. During major events using two machines can help the ice set up quicker. In one rink I worked at I used two machines to get the ice smooth for figure skaters after 60 high school boys tried out all at the same time. They could not believe the results in the ice quality. An added benefit to this is staff training. Usually the manager or highly skilled technician would operate one of the machines alongside the person on duty. This allows extra training time for this staff member as it's vital they match the speed, water output, and amount shaved as the other operator.

It's understandable if a facility has to trade in their old resurfacer when a new one arrives. If possible take advantage of having multiple machines on site. Keep them operational, keep the staff trained and the results and loss of down time for your facility will show.



NEISMA 2019 Awards

Frank J. Zamboni Award



Jeff Bardwell - Everett Arena
with Tom Walsh (left) and Ed Peduto (Right)

Frank J. Zamboni Award

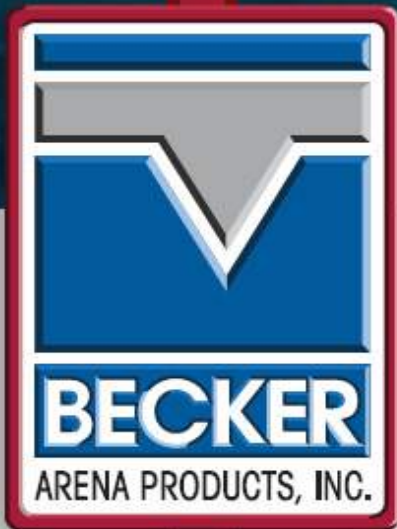


Paul Gallivan—Boston College

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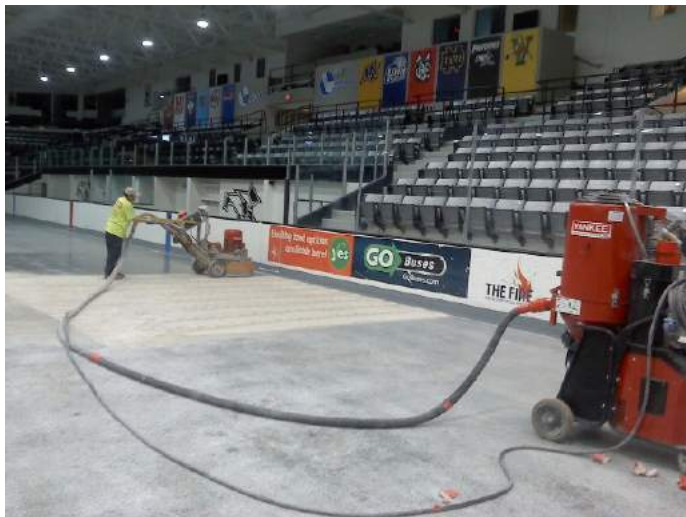
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From front cover - How level is your slab

a clean ice-free slab to establish benchmarks and produce a scan, and a few more hours to analyze the data and to map it out on a rink diagram similar to the one below. The cost for this is about \$3,000, but it will allow you and your staff to visually see where high and low spots are.

After you analyzed the data and located the high and low spots, one option is to grind down the high spots. A local concrete or construction company who has a concrete grinder machine will be able to complete this work. Be sure to know exactly how thick your supply pipes are buried in your slab and to verify that you are not grinding too deep. The cost varies based on how many spots you want to grind down but it's usually based on an hourly rate.



Concrete Grinder removing a high spot on slab

If the scanning and grinding is not a feasible option, a simple process is to determine based off your multiple measurements exactly where the high spots are on your surface. Designing your own diagram and keeping it in your IR room or employee room is a good way to get all your employees in sync and on the same page.



THE RINK RAT

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NEISMA

NEISMA is a professional service organization, organized to provide the ice skating industry with education and training. Since 1972 NEISMA has disseminated technical information and conducted seminars on rink equipment, energy, air quality, marketing, skating programs, maintenance, and safety. NEISMA provides the professional rink manager with the technical information needed to operate a safe, efficient and profitable facility. The NEISMA Board of Directors is not a testing lab for vendors or their products. We are not responsible for vendor representations or errors. We neither endorse or recommend any vendors products.



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Employees, or children of your employees, are eligible for these college scholarships. Begin thinking NOW of those within your organization who would be worthy of this recognition and financial support. Applications will be available in the September Rink Rat, are due in March, and are announced at our Annual Spring Conference in April.

NEISMA Scholarships

For those who remember William “Bill” Chase, he loved ice skating and the ice skating business. Bill’s career included stints as a coach, youth hockey president, fundraiser, ice rink manager of the West Suburban Arena in Natick, MA (now called the William Chase Arena), founder and President of NEISMA and most memorably as a road salesman for Murray Sandler Skate & Sport Supply. Bill’s travels to rinks took him from northernmost Maine through Virginia. **Each one of these recipients was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.**



2019 RECIPIENT: Sarah Huber

Charles Moore Arena

Sarah Huber will be entering her junior year at Worcester Polytechnic Institute as a Biology and Biotechnology major with a minor in Global Public Health on a pre-veterinary track. She lives in Brewster, MA and graduated from Nauset Regional High School. Her father is an employee of the Charles Moore Arena where Sarah volunteered with the Learn To Skate Program. She is now a member of the Lower Cape Figure Skating Association’s Junior Board. At WPI, she is the Director of Social Media, Merchandise and Marketing of S.M.A.R.T (Students Mentoring Active Responsibility Together), an association dedicated to alcohol safety and the promotion of prosocial bystanders. Finally, Sarah was recently initiated into WPI’s chapter of Alpha Epsilon Delta, the National Health Preprofessional Honor Society. The sponsor of this scholarship is G & A Insurance.

2019 RECIPIENT: Olenka Duncan

Greater Canandaigua Civic Center

Olenka Duncan is a resident of Canandaigua, NY and will graduate from Canandaigua Academy this spring. She is a member of the National Honor Society, President of the high school's Fellowship of Christian Athletes, President of the Spanish Club, President and Founder of the Impact Club which is dedicated to the awareness of environmental issues both local and global, works with the Flower City Work Camp working with Rochester, NY inner city children, a group leader in the Vacation Bible School, volunteer at the Cheshire Community Action Team, a Teen Advisory Board Member for the Canandaigua community library and dives competitively for her high school and club teams. At the Greater Canandaigua Civic Center she works in the snack bar, skate rental, and on the ice with the GCCC Learn To Skate Program. In the fall, she will attend the University of Vermont to begin her studies in Environmental Engineering and Political Science. The sponsor of this scholarship is Safehold Special Risk.

2019 RECIPIENT: Liam Batson

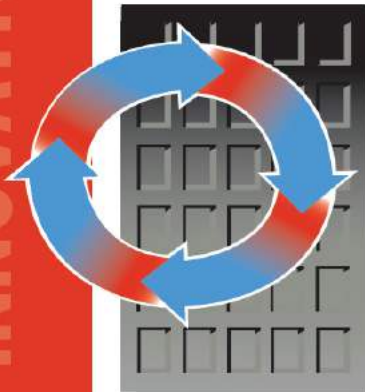
Quincy Youth Arena

Liam Batson is a resident of Quincy, MA and a summer employee at Quincy Youth Arena. He is a 2015 graduate of St. Andrews School in Middletown, DE and will be entering his senior year at Emory and Henry College in Virginia. Liam is a Civic Innovation major, minoring in History. He has been very active with Habitat for Humanity working in Washington County, VA, New Orleans, LA and Charleston, SC throughout his college carrier. He plans to pursue a post graduate degree and then apply to the Peace Corp. The Sponsor of this scholarship is Energie Innovation, in memory of Milan Baljak

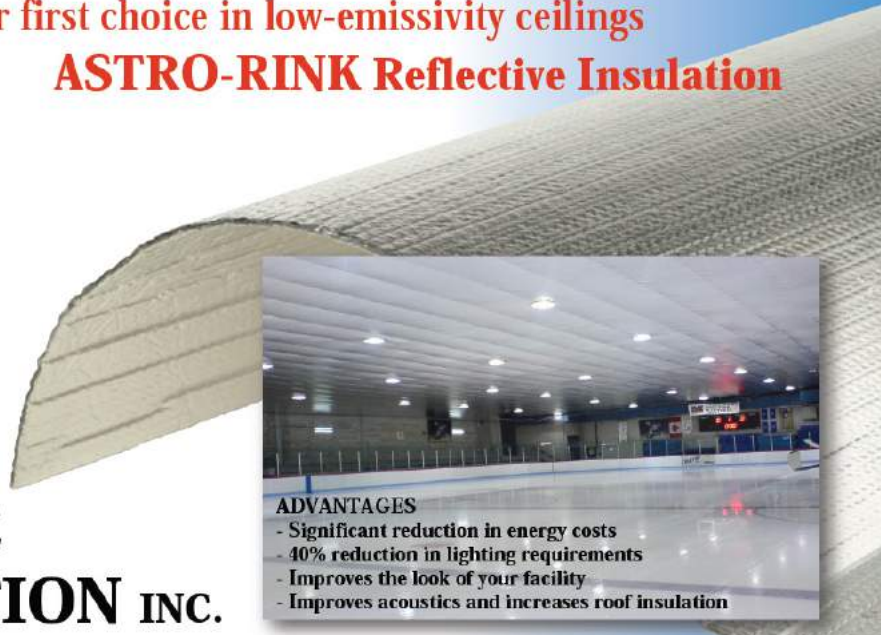
The Scholarship Committee would like to thank the scholarship sponsors who, through their pledges, enabled us to expand our scholarship program. Please consider supporting this effort in the future!

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ADV(ICE) - A recurring column dedicated to providing insight to new or struggling managers with quick actionable tips and advice they can implement at their facility. Knowing Ice is only half the equation. This column is meant to spark ideas, and point managers in the right direction. Every rink is different, and it should be expected that not every idea works in every rink. Find the useful parts to tailor it to your facility, situation, and management style.

State of the Arena

Trevor Josti CIT, CAO, CAP, CAM

Communication between staff and management throughout the season is a well-known key to success. Every staff member perspective can provide management with invaluable amounts of information. What a skate monitor, resurfacer operator, and concessions worker sees, hears, and experiences is vastly different. All employees accumulate a wealth of knowledge, suggestions, and complaints. Yet, we often hear companies struggling to create an inclusive environment where information flows freely, in a positive way. One method for achieving that desired communication is to host monthly staff meetings. However, today we will focus on the 3 biggest meetings of the year, what I like to call the “State of the Arena” meetings. If implementing monthly meetings is not feasible, start with these three, you will see the difference.

Throughout my career I've hosted and developed these “State of the Arena” meetings. I have these meetings three times a year. The objective of this style meeting is to bring in as much perspective and insight from every employee possible. I provide a form to guide the employees and ask them to think critically about the facility, operations, and daily routines. I provide plenty of space for them to freely communicate as they see fit, and often provide more in-depth questions at the end to provoke thought in areas they might not generally dwell on. How can _____ be done better? What makes your job more difficult than it needs to be? What are some new program ideas? What are some facility improvements we can take on ourselves? What policies are inefficient or harming our relationship with our customers? As a manager, our job is to

orchestrate and guide the meeting. This should be an opportunity for your staff to speak openly and honestly. Take note of issues you hear repeated. Be open to ideas of change and progress.

Timing the meetings can be just as important as having them. I find that they work best at the beginning, middle, and end of season. The 1st meeting of the year, will set the tone for the upcoming season. You can plan to hold this meeting when seasonal staff is coming back on. This meeting will be a review of what happened over the summer, and facility changes, staffing updates, policy updates, and what progress has been made towards goals that were set at the end of season meeting. A 2nd meeting can be scheduled right before high school season or a little further along in the middle of the season. This allows



(From page 13 - State of the Arena)

you to review what has been implemented, let employees voice opinions, evaluate staffing needs going forward, and set goals to be accomplished before the busiest part of your season. Lastly, your 3rd meeting should be a year in review. What has been accomplished? What could we have done better? Where did we go wrong? What do we want to accomplish over the off season to start next season off in a better spot? Recognize staff that has gone above and beyond to help everyone achieve their goals.

Actionable quick tips to make your meeting go smoothly.

1. **Make the form readily available where employees clock in, at least a week before the meeting.**
2. **Have employees complete the form on their shift and return to office before they leave or set a due date.**
3. **Allow yourself time to compile the forms**

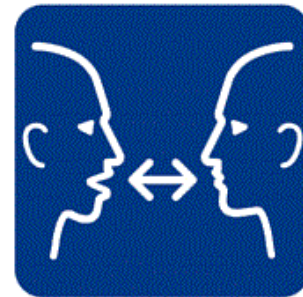
and read through them yourself before the meeting.

4. **Schedule the meetings in advance. Often our staff includes students and individuals with second jobs. I try to schedule them for the same day/time each month.**
5. **Keep communication open during the meeting you may be surprised what employees have to say when given the opportunities.**
6. **Take meeting minutes and list specific actions to be taken and goals to be completed.**
7. **Complete a final State of the Arena report with everyone's input taken into consideration, and clear plans for going forward. Give all employees a copy on their next shift**
8. **Task employees with these different goals and allow them to take pride and ownership in accomplishing them.**



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Communication is the driving force behind a high performing organization, your arena should be no different. Well-structured meetings can not only improve things from a management perspective, but it also gives a boost to employee morale. Employees begin to feel valued, and in return their quality of work will improve.

If you would like a sample "State of the Arena" form to be used in your facility, feel free to send me an email.

For comments, questions, and suggestions I can be reached directly at tjosti@fmcicesports.com



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Burning Out lines

By Tom Walsh, Boston College



Working at a place that doesn't use the ice much other than for the College's teams presents you with options that most people don't have. So once a year mid-season we try to burn out the lines. Even here it's difficult to find the right time to do it between the teams practicing, the BB floor being down or some other event. If you can find a spot in your schedule it's worth it.

Before you begin you'll need to shave your ice down lower than normal. This serves two purposes. Obviously, it's easier to get through the ice to where you want to be (the less ice there is), but more importantly, it's quicker to freeze in the trenches you've created when you're done. We put the ice set-point down a few hours before we begin the whole process to get a jump on the re-freeze. I'd recommend you crank up your hot water supply to get as much heat as you can. You can mix the temp down once you get started if you're worried about running out or it's too hot, but keep it hot enough or you'll be at it all night. You'll also need a decent hose that is long enough and won't burst on you, a "fan" garden spray nozzle and three people seems to be the right number. You might want to put on a pair of ice cleats. You'll be out there for a while and eventually lose track of where you're stepping. The top of the ice will end up soaked and you might end up looking like Wile Coyote.

One guy on the nozzle, one a third of the way back to door to keep the hose moving and one by the door / hose shutoff to pull in extra hose and to shut off the wa-

ter in an emergency. Start out at the far end of the ice to slowly hit the cloudy lines with the hot water. Take your time until you get a feel for it. Don't get cocky or you'll end up dragging out the ice paint. It will normally keep melting ice after you move on so don't go too deep to start out. You can go back to a spot if you are close by and it doesn't look clear enough. Another reason for the spikes. Make sure you keep the nozzle moving and don't dwell on one spot for more than a couple seconds. It's better to keep sweeping it back and forth. Additionally, constantly have the middle man move the hose both out of the nozzle guy's feet and lightly flick it like a snake back to the door or it'll melt right to the paint in a couple minutes. It takes us 3 hours or so to do it. After you're done I would recommend leaving it alone for a bit to give some of the spots time to freeze up and thaw out your feet. Usually the end you started on will set up some before you wrap up with the hot water.

You then need to flood the "burnt out" spots to ensure they fill up, freeze correctly and are skate-able as soon as possible. The best approach for the flood and to ensure that you get the right coverage is to put down a good amount of water and let it cascade into the low spots. Depending on how deep the channels are you might need to plan to redo the flooding after it sets up. Normally we fill them up right after we finish, make a couple sheets the next day and we're good to go. Sometimes the coaches complain about the ice being "crunchy" afterwards. It is a little, but it's the price you pay for a couple days to look like you repainted the sheet.

The key to the whole process is to make sure you have enough time for this all to all occur. Nothing worse than trying to do a good thing and end up in a crisis. Someone told me the first time he did this a long time ago he was just going to do the creases but he got carried away. There was too much ice and the rink ended up closing down for close to a week until they could get it back to normal. If you have any schedule openings, now would be a great time to take a test run to get a feel for it and see how your ice reacts. Good luck



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Summertime

By Tom Ferguson



As I write this it is the first day of Summer. The longest day of the year, right? It doesn't seem so long to me but maybe you early risers can attest to it. Anyway, summer reading is supposed to be a popular past-time so I thought I'd contribute in some small way. What could be more fun than an insurance article!

I thought I might pass along some thoughts that might help when the next season starts. A lot of the claims we see arise outside the facility



in the parking lots. These claims can be tougher to defend than ones that occur inside the rink because we don't have the assumption of risk defense available. It reverts back to the basic tort law concept where more burden of proof is placed on the defendant, you. The defense expense goes up as does the likelihood of settlement. Now is a good time to look at ways to mitigate or eliminate potential issues. Scout the public areas for uneven surfaces, holes, inclines and declines that can be addressed now. Eliminate those problem areas that always show up at



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some point during the winter freeze or spring thaw. These types of claims can easily approach \$50,000 - \$80,000 very quickly.

The refrigeration system is another source of large claims and huge headaches. In addition to the costs of repair and replacement, the loss of income can be significant. Insurance can respond but you still have the major headache of the inconvenience and disappointment of your customers. Rescheduling when you can or having to find alternative ice for a big tournament has to be a major headache. Also, please remember that the Equipment Break-down coverage will not respond if the cause of the loss is normal wear and tear.

Did you know that while waivers are great in most states for aiding in our defense efforts, they are also a great way to build a data base for marketing? You probably did, but I have a word minimum for this article.

That's all I've got for now. Besides, less than half of you have gotten this far. I lost most of you at "spring thaw" I'm sure. For those of you that are still reading, please feel free to make suggestions on topics for future articles. Just forward to them to John Zullo and he'll pass them on. Have a great and safe Summer!

LANDSCAPING 101

An Attractive Exterior Doesn't Have to be Expensive!

(From the Archives)

Very few people will debate the merits of beautiful landscaping: the White House South lawn, Augusta's fairways and the Parade of Roses bring a smile to most faces. Having grown up in the city, not only did I think everything involved with landscaping was more akin to witchcraft, I failed to realize how enjoyable maintaining good looking grounds can be. With the Burbank Arena's volunteer gardener Marilyn Lewis recently turning 80, I felt it was time to share many of her secrets that I have picked up during the last 17 summers peeking over her shoulder.

Keep in mind that the initial process of taking bad landscaping and making it attractive involves much more work than maintaining good looking grounds from year to year. Having said that, most rinks are

quiet in the spring, staff look for reasons to get outside, and the satisfaction of doing much of the work yourself provides lots of pride and bottom line savings. Having said that, if you choose to hire a landscaper and pay the bill, good for you, you will still have a good feeling every time you approach your building.

In no particular order, here are some of Marilyn's gardening pearls:

IT ALL STARTS WITH THE DIRT! – At least 3" of topsoil is needed to keep a good looking lawn, the thicker the better. "Repair patching" of lawns from plow damage, grubs, and drought should ALWAYS be accompanied by the application of fresh dirt! Likewise, "Tree & Shrub" mix ("different dirt") should be



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used when planting perennials (those things you stick in the ground once and leave in for years), “complete planting mix” & topsoil is fine for annuals (those flowers you rip out every year, usually with bright colored flowers).

HAVE A WATERING SYSTEM – it took years of failing for us to invest in a sprinkler system. Expensive up front, uses lots of water, annually needs to be

blown out with air before freezing but SAVES a ton of time trying to water with hoses. You don’t have to have an inground system. There are timers, hoses and sprinkler heads available to make an adequate system for the front of most rinks that can be assembled for under \$ 200. To winterize this, just bring it inside for the winter! I’d dare say, any lawn that looks good is being watered by an automatic sprinkler system.

CHEMICALS are a Garden’s Best Friend – I’m sure there are organic products that can get the job done; however, Marilyn and I use off-the-shelf products to help things grow well. They Include: SCOTTS 4 Step Fertilizer for the Lawn – If you are planting grass seed, make sure you use STEP 1 for Seeding in April, Otherwise STEP 1 in April includes crabgrass killer; an enemy of a good looking lawn. After that Steps 2,3 and 4 are applied every 6-8 weeks

(Continued on page 27

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(From page 25 - Landscaping 101)

Weed Preventer – not to be confused with Weed killer, this granular product is spread throughout a clean flowerbed every spring. We've had good success with a purple bag brand called Trefelan. Preen is also a popular brand. It keeps the weeds from growing while allowing the flowers to grow beautifully.

Weed Killer – Roundup is the # 1 brand, used in parking lots, around fence posts and anywhere that you WANT NOTHING TO GROW. Do not use near trees, shrubs or grass, it will kill those, too. Weed-b-gone claims to kill weeds in lawns without killing the grass, we've only enjoyed moderate success with this product.

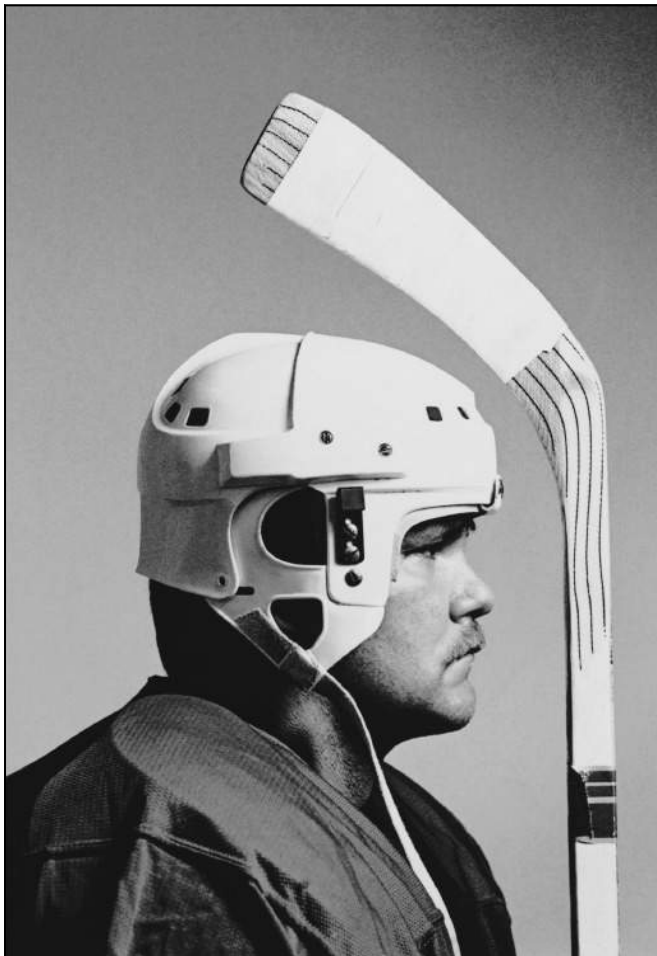
Specialty Chemicals – Miracle-Gro, Holly-tone and seafood-based fertilizers all have their role in Marilyn's repertoire. I'd suggest you strike up a friendship with the local gardening supply house (Good luck if you prefer the "big box" stores) and ask them for

their fertilizing / chemical opinions. They want repeat customers, they're unlikely to steer you wrong.

The Mystery Elements – Marilyn continues to have various powders in plastic tubs with "Sour Cream" on their covers. I know that I will never be privy to what is actually inside those tubs which she secretly sprinkles about the flowerbeds. I can tell you that I am dubious as to any effect that they have, since following the above has always resulted in impressive flowers (of course, I'm from the city!).

Don't go Cheap on Grass Seed, and keep it moist – we never plant grass seed without "Starter Fertilizer" in the mix. We always need to supplement the watering system when growing new grass. My preferred method is to fill the Zamboni with cold water, hook up our 12 volt pump, and water the grass seed from the comfort of the driver's seat

(Continued on page 28)



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(From page 27- Landscaping 101)

(while parked, of course!). Keeping the seat from drying out usually results in green “fuzz” in a week and blades of grass in 2 weeks.



Buy a Good Mower and Enjoy your Grounds – I’ll never forget the first summer debate on the \$700 we spent for a 22” Honda mower. Some, including me, thought it an un-

necessary luxury. I am happy to say that with minimal maintenance beyond keeping a sharp blade on it, the mower is STILL mowing the Burbank Arena lawns. It has even outlived the gentleman who insisted that Honda was the way to go. We all take turns mowing, the front area gets mowed more frequently because

the summer customers love to see fresh mower tire marks across the manicured lawn.

Deer Resistant Perennials are available! Who Knew? Certainly not the kid from the urban jungle. Plant the wrong bush and it will be decrepit next spring. Buy the perennials that the deer disdain or be prepared to annually plant your perennials!

In a nutshell, that’s our plan. Marilyn spends hours trimming the shrubs, exotic grasses and all the other plantings that have found their way to the Burbank. We even have a Kousa Dogwood planted in her late husband’s memory. Ralph used to help her out saying “ If she’s working in the front of the rink, I work in the back, that’s how we’ve stayed together so long.”

I hope this helps a few of our facilities with less than appealing exteriors bring some good looking plantings to an industry that often overlooks what’s outside their building.

Letters to the Editor

NEISMA encourages readers to submit letters / articles to the editor on:

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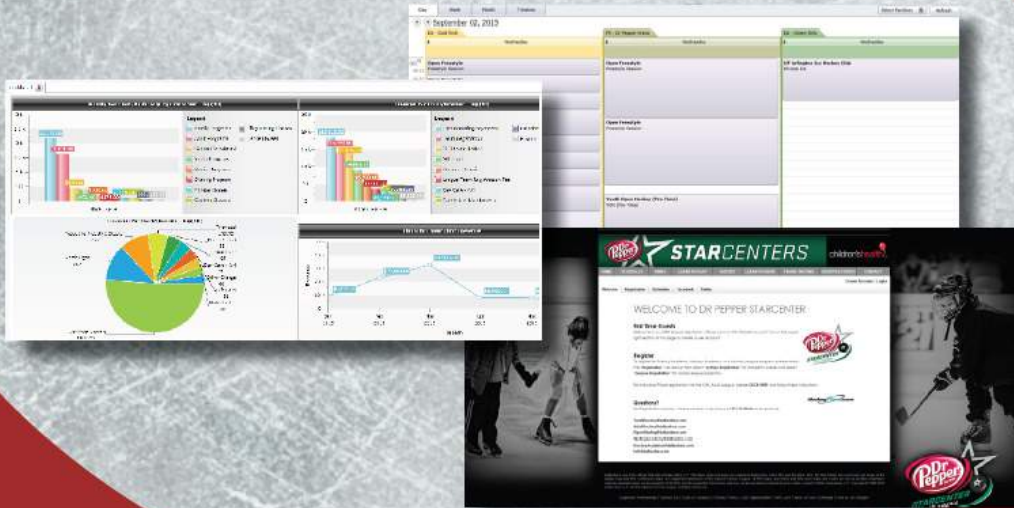
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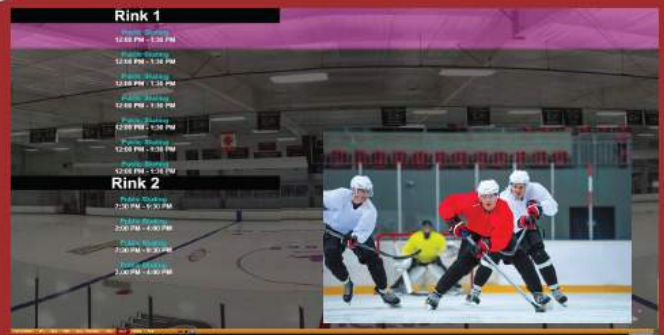
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