


## Hawaiian Fun in the Sun at Reinders' 21st Conference



Source: [www.TurfMagazine.com](http://www.TurfMagazine.com)

There may have been cold, blustery March weather outside, but there was plenty of sun, surf, leis and fun inside the Waukesha Expo Center in suburban Milwaukee, Wis., at the 21st Reinders Green Industry Conference. The show had a festive Hawaiian atmosphere which coincided with the tropical theme. Even a surfing Elvis welcomed everyone at the front door. 

Reinders had dual "Catch the Wave" surfboards for everyone's entertainment. Attendees had the opportunity to compete side by side with their friends and colleagues to see who could ride the surfboard simulator the longest. Throughout each day, songs such as Hawaii Five-0, Tiny Bubbles, the theme from the motion picture Jaws, Surfin' USA, Ukulele Hula, Kokomo, Blue Hawaii and others could be heard over the Expo Center sound system in the main show hall.

Everyone was able to choose from more than 35 seminars to help enhance their knowledge and skills. Six different educational tracts ran simultaneously to meet the needs of landscape contractors, lawn care operators, golf course superintendents, sports turf managers, equipment mechanics and irrigation contractors. Matt Cavanaugh of PBI Gordon had a two-part seminar, "Kill Weeds, Not your Budget." He discussed the importance of understanding how the active ingredients in various products are right for specific weeds and which formulations are better at different times during the year.

The principles and best practices for installing large and difficult water features were provided by Brian Helfrich of Aquascape. He combined practical advice with a pragmatic approach to this profitable service which contractors can offer their customers.

Developing an environmentally sound ornamental insect pest management strategy was the topic of an informative seminar from Dr. Chris Williamson of

the University of Wisconsin. He reviewed regional insect issues which included an update on Emerald Ash Borer activity.

Jeff Carowitz of Strategic Force Marketing discussed the key elements necessary for contractors to build a successful marketing plan in today's economy. He indicated various social media tools such as Google+ and Facebook are helpful, but one must devote at least two hours a week to keep them up to date so they are beneficial for attracting new customers.

With the emergence of LED lighting and accompanying catalogs full of products, some contractors and companies are hesitant or too overwhelmed to add outdoor lighting to their service offering. Terry Dee of Nightscaping showed how a single bag of lighting tools can get one started in this profitable business segment.

Eric Miltner of Agrium Advanced Technologies discussed various new nitrogen fertilizer technologies on the market. He explained how they improve plant uptake efficiency and why that is important, not only for maintaining quality turf, but also for protecting our environment.

Items used for storm water management including grass, gravel, block and concrete were examined by Matt Hollingsworth of NDS. He presented an overview of various projects and discussed different applications where permeable pavers are being installed.

In addition to the wide variety of informative seminars, over 80 industry suppliers and manufacturers showcased their equipment and products and answered questions to help individuals prepare for the season. Many exhibitors provided a variety of special offers for green industry professionals to take advantage of.

A large array of raffle prizes was given away at the end of each day. Along with the general raffle, attendees also had the chance to win the show grand prize: a trip to Disney World and \$1,000 spending money. They visited exhibitor booths to find the correct answers to questions on an entry form they were given at the registration desk. Heather Henning of Racine Country Club, Racine, Wis., was the lucky winner.



Reinders has hosted this conference and tradeshow every other year since 1973. It brings together nationally known speakers, enlightening seminars and a variety of industry manufacturers all in one place.

Their 22nd Green Industry Conference will be held March 11-12, 2015.

#### *Photos:*

*Top: Craig Reinders, president, presents Heather Henning of Racine Country Club, Racine, Wis., the show grand prize, a trip to Disney World along with \$1,000 spending money.*

*Bottom: A group of attendees and Reinders staff participated in the Hawaiian*

fun as they donned their sunglasses and tropical shirts to “Catch the Wave.”  
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