

OUT WORKING

SPRING 2023 | VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 1



EXPERT ANALYSIS
Fitness advice
for landscapers



CONSERVATION UPDATE
AriensCo "Certified Gold"

DEALER FOCUS
Wesley & Son Outdoors

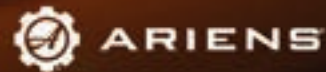


IKON

ONYX



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A number of trade and brand names appear in *Out Working*. For ease of design, these are displayed without their superscript or subscript symbols. The most common names are: Ariens, Gravely, RapidCare, Kohler and Kawasaki.

RapidTrak, Onyx and REFLEX are TM and Sno-Thro is registered.

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Welcome,



AriensCo is doing its part, too. In the words of our human resources director, Tracy Tuschel, “If employees are happy and healthy then they will bring their whole selves to work, and the company thrives as a whole.” We are leading the way with programs that emphasize nutrition education, exercise, on-site mental health support and community building.

The health of our natural environment is just as important. AriensCo was recently “Certified Gold” by the Wildlife Habitat Council for an employee-supported conservation project to restore and protect hundreds of acres of natural habitat at our headquarters in Brillion, Wisconsin. We examine its next phase in this issue (page 26), which adds 50 more acres of prairie oak savannah, as well as the creation of marshes that will support an expanded variety of wildlife.

I hope that you find inspiration in these pages to take a moment and consider the health of your colleagues and community. We live in a world that can often focus on the pursuit of short-term goals and easy wins. Good health requires discipline and long-term commitment. Like any worthy pursuit, it yields a lifetime of rewards.

Sincerely,

Dan Ariens

When we talk about success in the landscaping industry, we often focus on business acumen. We concentrate on promoting our companies, hiring great people and working with the right equipment. These are surely necessary components for success, but they don't tell the entire story.

Health and wellness are essential to the foundations on which we build successful businesses and rewarding careers. They give us, energy, focus, stamina, motivation and most importantly, the ability to chase after our goals. Even the most talented and ambitious among us needs to maintain their wellbeing.

In this issue of *Out Working*, we look at health and wellness in ways that go beyond the classic discussions around healthcare and insurance. We learn how landscaping companies are incentivizing healthy working habits and providing opportunities for employees to improve their mental and physical health (page 16).



ARIENS|CO NEWS:

Filling Fayetteville

AriensCo held a hiring event in Fayetteville, Tennessee, home to a new manufacturing and distribution center. The goal was to complete the staffing of approximately 350 new jobs being created to support the new location's operations.

The Fayetteville location has helped position AriensCo to be geographically closer to its dealer partners, customers and suppliers in the southeastern U.S. It currently serves as a center for Gravelly commercial outdoor power equipment manufacturing. The event featured walk-in interviews and tours of the newly renovated building.

"Our investment in Tennessee has provided opportunities for Lincoln County residents to become part of the AriensCo family, and we hope it leads to a lasting impact on rural Tennessee's economy," said AriensCo Chairman and CEO Dan Ariens.



Award-winning design

AS-Motor, AriensCo's high-grass, high-slope mower brand in Europe, is a "German Design Award Winner 2023" for its new AS 940 Sherpa 4WD XL lawn mower.

The brand was presented with this prestigious award as part of the GaLaBau 2022 tradeshow for excellence in sustainable product design. The mower is constructed with over 99% recyclable parts and designed to manage tall grasses that are vital for nature conservation and biodiversity projects.

"We are extremely proud to be part of AS-Motor's journey and support a well-deserved achievement," said Larry Weyers, group president at AriensCo. "This machine was recognized for its striking design that provides answers for companies seeking specialized equipment for conservation projects, a quickly growing sector. What an accomplishment!"



Working together

AriensCo is renewing its sponsorship with the U.S. Biathlon Association as part of its commitment to support winter sports.

The U.S. Biathlon Association promotes the growth of biathlon in the U.S. and helps prepare athletes for competition. Biathlon combines cross-country skiing with rifle marksmanship, where athletes race through cross-country ski trails and make a series of stops on the shooting range to hit five circular targets with .22-caliber rounds.

"AriensCo is a consistent advocate for the U.S. Biathlon team and has sponsored them since 2018," said AriensCo Chairman and CEO Dan Ariens. "With the recent opening of Ariens Nordic Center in December, we're eager to host the team for training sessions, and we are looking forward to a successful future full of great sporting wins."



Italian dealers visit the U.K.

Seven Italian AriensCo dealer partners traveled to the U.K. in February to visit the manufacturer's facilities in Oxford. During the two-day visit, the group toured the factory and service shop, met with Ariens product managers to learn about new models and features and shared experiences on demos and successful sales tactics.

Danilo Sivini, owner of Sidan, AriensCo's distributor in Italy, led the trip, which included sightseeing in historic Oxford.

"This group represents the second generation of their families' businesses, bringing extensive experience from decades of working in the industry," Sivini said. "They're excited and very eager to continue the work of expanding awareness of the Ariens zero-turn product lineup throughout Italy, promoting its efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Plus, their family-owned business culture aligns with AriensCo's way of doing business. We share very similar core values."



New IKON Onyx

Ariens has launched the IKON Onyx, a new, custom zero-turn lawn mower equipped with a 52-inch deck and 23-horsepower engine.

The IKON Onyx retains premium features of the IKON platform, such as a fully welded, steel tubular frame for durability, a 22-inch plush, high-back seat for exceptional comfort, and an 11-gauge fabricated Ariens ENVY steel deck. It sports a striking black-on-black finish and large, aggressive tread rear tires. Extras like a molded floor mat and rubber isolators under the seat absorb shock and enhance comfort.

"Every Ariens lawn mower makes a statement, and the IKON Onyx does just that," said Andy Massignan, AriensCo product director for residential lawn. "It reflects performance and attention-grabbing style. Even when parked in the driveway, it tells your neighbors that you don't settle for just anything to cut your grass."



Tough competition

AriensCo attended the National Collegiate Landscape Competition (NCLC) in March at Mississippi State University, hosted by the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP).

Nearly 600 students from horticulture and landscape programs from colleges across the country came together to compete individually or as collegiate teams in a series of hands-on categories. They worked late hours to finish landscape designs and construct hardscapes, all while battling freezing rain to earn points.

Gravelly sponsored competitions at the event, and members of the AriensCo team led workshops and awarded a scholarship.

"Seeing such passion and commitment from these young individuals makes us excited about the landscaping industry's future," said JW Washington, AriensCo.





SOCIAL SUCCESS

Gravely dealer Wesley & Son Outdoors saw its sales skyrocket after investing in social media.

By Julia Shrader

Social media advertising offers tremendous potential to help businesses garner attention, particularly in local markets. It's imperative that equipment dealerships or landscaping companies are present and active on social media and remain current with online trends that can help drive growth. Companies that do invest in social media are reaping the benefits.

For Wesley & Son Outdoors (Wesley & Son), a family owned and operated outdoor power equipment dealer in McRae-Helena, Georgia, investing in social media has been extremely rewarding. The dealership is projected to sell \$2 million in 2023, which is four times more than its revenue just four years ago. The company credits this growth to social media advertising alone.



Wes Yawn extends the hospitality Wesley & Son is known for.

Wesley Yawn opened the company's doors in 2002 as a used car and ATV dealership. In 2005, he switched gears and reopened the business as a lawn mower dealership with Gravely at the forefront. The five-person dealership is run by Wesley and his son, Wes, who joined the family business in 2015 as head of sales and worked alongside his father to implement a social media presence in 2019.

"When we first started, we were selling \$100,000 - \$150,000 in Gravely equipment. Last year, we brought in \$1.8 million with our new advertising method and are expecting to see that number continue to rise," he said.

The father-son duo keeps busy, selling roughly 400 mowers per year. The company's main sources of revenue comes from selling Gravely residential and commercial equipment and repairing machines in its service shop.

While most of Wesley & Son's customers are residential, it sells a lot of commercial lawn mowers to homeowners because in their rural location, an average size yard measures some 7 - 10 acres of land. Wesley says these

customers prefer Gravely equipment because it's known for tackling large lawn jobs and easily handling challenging terrain.

"Bahia grass is the most common grass type you'll find in our area. It's a very tough grass to cut when it's dry, and Gravely's X-Factor 3 deck has tremendously helped our customers get a premium and consistent cut," Wesley explained.

Gravely equipment isn't the only factor attracting customers to Wesley & Son. The company is known for treating customers like family. Both father and son say the personal service they provide to their clients, a service that stems from being family-owned, makes a dramatic difference.

"We're still old school in terms of business," Wesley said. "We like to meet customers in person. It's nice to explain a product to them in detail and foster that personal relationship. We want them to walk in the door as a customer and leave as a friend."

Going digital

After trying various advertising methods over the years with no success, the dealership came to realize that social media is its best form of advertising. Brand awareness is the primary goal, and it's working. The company sees approximately 50 customers a day that travel from across the state after seeing its online ads.

Facebook is the dealer's main social media channel. It is monitored by Wes alongside a third-party company that assists in creating posts, tracking leads and managing the company's website.

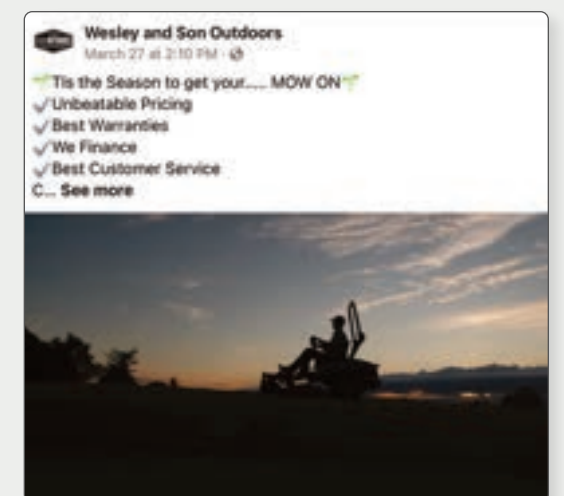
"We've found that posting a variety of dealership and product photos, equipment tips and links to Gravely articles maintains our audience engagement on Facebook," Wes explained. "However, the most popular social media posts would have to be our ads. Our ads are designed to display information about the high-value proposition of Gravely equipment, which really catches peoples' eyes."

The company utilizes slideshow ads, which are video-like ads that use motion and text to get a message across quickly and effectively. They also post ads that share promotions like 0% interest financing on qualifying equipment. Customers can even text the dealership for personal service.

"What amazes me with social media is that you get people from 20 - 70 years old that are using the internet and coming into our shop," Wesley said. "If you're not on the internet now, you're behind."

Wes says they hope to grow their social following and continue to see that translated into a real-life customer base. Moving forward, they want to explore posting videos on Facebook. If the company sees significant return on this form of self-generated content, Wes hopes to create a TikTok account to remain trendy and reach a wider audience.

"We're also looking at taking the information we gain from using social media and pairing it with a CRM (customer relationship management) system that will help us track interactions between us and our customers," Wes said.





Gravely guidance

Both Wesley and Wes attribute some of their success to the immense amount of support the dealership has received from AriensCo. They say having a personal relationship and mutual commitment from AriensCo has helped them develop a better understanding of the outdoor power equipment world, and also inspired them to keep growing.

“Gravely has been amazing to us. Dan and Stephen Ariens have become great friends of ours, and we talk frequently. It speaks volumes when these guys, who are busy running a successful business, take time out of their day to have a conversation and work through customer solutions with us. Having the support from these guys makes it feel like we’re part of the same family business,” Wes said.

The dealership says its Gravely representative, Adam Langley, goes above and beyond. Langley is considered family and chats with the guys at any time of the day or night. He frequently makes the rounds, driving hundreds of miles across southern Georgia, southern Alabama and western Florida to ensure his customers are supported. Wes said it was Langley who pushed the company to explore social media advertising in the first place.

Wesley and Wes expect the dealership to continue growing with help from AriensCo and are eyeing more growth in the future. That may include a second location.

“Our wagon is loaded as a company; we stay very busy. We hope to expand in our own town and open another dealership in the future. I think we have the opportunity to grow with AriensCo at our side, and we know the company will support us in any way they can,” Wes concluded. ■

Wes and Wesley Yawn.





Past Preserver

Hank Dermer is a director for the Gravelly Tractor Club of America, a group that celebrates the rich heritage of the Gravelly tractor — the brand's first product line.

By Julia Shrader

Hank Dermer is one of 15 directors for the Gravelly Tractor Club of America (GTCOA). The group is passionate about Gravelly tractors and their attachments, and many of its members restore and preserve vintage models. The group publishes the Gravelly Gazette, a quarterly magazine, and hosts an annual Gravelly Mow-In, an event where Gravelly lovers come to show off their machines, swap parts and talk shop.

Dermer is retired and resides in rural Honey Brook, Pennsylvania. In the quiet countryside, he keeps himself busy communicating with fellow GTCOA members, restoring Gravelly riding tractors and equipment, and conducting behind-the-scenes club work. *Out Working* caught up with Dermer to learn more about the GTCOA and its activities, as well as to explore what makes Dermer a Gravelly superfan.

OW: How did your relationship with Gravelly tractors begin?

HD: At a young age, I learned to appreciate well-built equipment. My father and grandfather worked for manufacturing companies — I don't have blood in my veins, I have oil in them! I'd been familiar with the Gravelly brand for many years.

I purchased my first tractor in 1976, a Gravelly 816, and realized Gravelly's commitment to quality. I knew a Gravelly machine was meant to be rebuilt, not thrown out. I fell in love with the Gravelly name!

Most recently, I owned an equipment rental company. It was a great business with great people. I retired in 2011. I was driving one day and saw a Gravelly 12G tractor on the side of the road. I knew I had to restore it. During this process, I found the GTCOA, which met only an hour from where I lived. I went to my first meeting and met a lot of great people. I joined the club and have been volunteering with it ever since.

OW: What is the GTCOA's purpose?

HD: The GTCOA is a volunteer club for members to discuss Gravelly, its history and the operation of Gravelly tractors and their attachments. It was founded in 1996 by Craig Seabrook and his "sidekick" Fred Kuntz. They were very passionate about tractors. They figured if there were clubs that existed for alternate hobbies and interests, why not start one for Gravelly enthusiasts? One thing led to another and the GTCOA was born.

Most club members restore and work on Gravelly equipment as a hobby. We joke about the "Gravelly

widows," because these women don't see their husbands. They're off in the garage refurbishing a Gravelly!

Members really care about each other, and we're a family. People are constantly going out of their way to help the next person who needs it. The glue that holds us together is the Gravelly tractor.

OW: Can you describe your involvement in the GTCOA since joining and your role today?

HD: Since becoming a member in 2011, I've held several roles, including vice president for three years and

president for four. My priority has always been to work with teams to improve the club and ensure member satisfaction. I used to love reaching out and calling someone who was disappointed and ending the phone call with them feeling fulfilled. That was fun!

Today, I'm one of 15 directors of the club. I am always chatting with members about anything Gravelly related. This year, I'm helping organize our annual 2023 club Mow-In, an event where all the members get together to show their Gravellys and host a swap meet. And of course, I'm repairing Gravelly four-wheel riding tractors. Currently restoring my 50th tractor!



A vintage Gravelly riding tractor.

INTERVIEW

OW: Who are the members of the GTCOA? What do they get out of being in the club?

HD: There are about 900 - 1,000 members in the club each year. We have people spread across the country and even a few international members. Most of our members are much older because Gravely is a brand name with a lot of heritage. People join because they had a grandfather who owned a Gravely, they found one in a barn and were curious about its mechanics, or they simply have a large yard and like to mow with a Gravely. Anyone is welcome to join! The only requirements are a love for equipment and an awareness of Gravely.

Membership grants you a Gravely Gazette magazine four times a year, a space to attend our annual Mow-In, and most importantly, camaraderie and friends for life. The Mow-In is a national convention to celebrate the purpose of the club. We select a site to display dozens of Gravely

parts and tractors, and there are a bunch of contests and games. We start planning a year in advance because it's so much work!

OW: What is your favorite memory with the GTCOA?

HD: Without a doubt, the 2016 Mow-In. It was the largest turnout we've ever had, and the 100th anniversary of Gravely. Most importantly, it fostered the relationship between AriensCo and the GTCOA. Ever since then, AriensCo has participated at every Mow-In.

AriensCo Chairman and CEO Dan Ariens stopped by with a few other AriensCo employees and AriensCo Museum staff. He saw two, 40 by 80-foot tents full of Gravely tractors, and another field full of Gravely equipment. He never realized how much Gravely meant to us. Since then, AriensCo personnel and the AriensCo Museum team have been at every Mow-In. They come and present at every show, host a cookout and hang out. That's family!

Attendees gather for the annual GTCOA Mow-In event.



Hank Dermer collects and restores a variety of vintage Gravely equipment.

OW: What is the Gravely Gazette and what does it mean for club members?

HD: The Gravely Gazette is a quarterly newsletter that informs, entertains and promotes a sense of community among the club. John Damtoft, our current editor, oversees the entire newsletter. You'll find technical information and support for tractors, history, technology tips, current events, etc. There are tear-jerking stories as well, and it highlights the glue that holds us together.

All club members receive a Gazette. Because many aren't capable or don't have the time to get super involved, they rely on the Gazette. It's a treasured piece of mail for these people, and they read every single word!

OW: What does the future hold for GTCOA?

HD: The plan is to continue growing and to recruit younger members to keep the club's name alive. We don't have much of an online presence, but we have plans for a new website to spread club awareness. It will include over 1,000 Gravely documents for people to see, such as sales brochures, owner's manuals, Gravely tractor stories and more.

We're also working on "Mentoring the Co-coordinators," a program that will make it easier to recruit members to run a Mow-In event. We've started the program to help alleviate the workload for the next person in charge since there is a different Mow-In leader every year. We want it to be an honor, not a burden! ■



Dan Ariens bonds with Craig Seabrook, the founder of the GTCOA.



Showing off vintage Gravelys at the 2017 Mow-In.

The Healthy LANDSCAPE

Focusing on the health of your workers goes beyond offering health insurance.

By Belinda Lichty Clarke

For landscapers and contractors, offering employee health insurance helps attract and retain employees and builds a healthier and more productive workforce. But in today's work environment, companies are offering more than just health benefits. Many landscaping companies are offering non-traditional health and wellness incentives to further boost employee satisfaction and retention rates.

The growing list of wellness incentives often includes a variety of benefits, some of which employees can customize. Examples range from mental health support and flexible schedules to free or low-cost benefits, like financial counseling.

Though this is logistically more difficult than offering a standard package to all workers, the cost and time involved are often minor compared with losing employees and having to recruit new ones.

"Offering some free or inexpensive benefits can set your company apart from your competitors," said Terry Delany, a 20-year green industry consultant who contributes to Green Industry Pros. "Flexibility is the key. I've seen great success with landscape companies that moved to a 10-hour, four-day week. If it rains one day, they are now making up that day on a Friday instead of a Saturday. And if it doesn't rain, the employees enjoy a three-day weekend."

Jennifer Myers spent 20 years as a landscape professional and is now the executive director for the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) and senior director of workforce development for the foundation. She says that the topic of mental health is becoming more prevalent.

She shared a few examples: Myers was talking to an NALP member recently who said that she is lucky to have an employer who made her feel like the topic of mental health was important, and that she felt comfortable discussing her struggles because she knew she had the support of her company leadership.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Myers added that another NALP member has set up a virtual counseling option for employees that they can access without taking time off, paid for by the company.

“Feeling supported with regards to mental health looks different for everyone,” she explained. “For some, it’s having the option to take time off. For others, it’s knowing you can have these conversations with your supervisor.”

As part of her job with NALP, Myers manages communities within the association, including the Women in Landscape and Veterans in Landscape networks. It is in these communities that most of the conversations around health and employee well-being are taking place.

“The members of this community are talking about mental health because for veterans, there is a need to support the transition into civilian life,” she said. “We need to

reinforce that ‘It’s OK to not be OK’ and that veterans do have special considerations. We say that it’s better to work through a handful of ‘It’s not OK’ days with someone than to not have that employee at all.”

Myers says that the landscaping industry is particularly welcoming to women and military veterans, and building employee networks and support groups can help the industry evolve and thrive.

“Our industry is all about sharing and we love to network, but sometimes it can be hard to break into the industry. This is why we have these communities — to help move beyond the silos of individualism,” she explained. “People see these communities and they know they are going to be supported and given a place to keep learning. It’s not just about being veteran-friendly, for example, it’s about being veteran ready.”



Tracy Tuschel

The AriensCo approach

Tracy Tuschel works with AriensCo on a variety of wellness programs for employees. As the director of human resources, she said a commitment to wellness starts at the top. Because leadership is so invested in AriensCo team members, the company has such a wide variety of programs and services to promote overall well-being.

“Our leadership will support what we feel necessary to ensure that our employees are taken care of from a wellness perspective,” she explained.

“Their support is there in every way, shape and form, starting from the core belief that if employees are happy and healthy then they will bring their whole selves to work, and the company thrives as a whole.”

AriensCo’s commitment to employee well-being extends far beyond health insurance. For example, the company employs an on-staff nurse and a Bellin physical therapist, in addition to two Bellin nurses on site collectively full-time (Bellin Health System serves northeast Wisconsin).

Offering on-site medical care for issues ranging from sinus infections to blood pressure testing is a win-win because employees don’t have to leave work for acute care. More importantly, they don’t have to pay out of pocket for a visit, Tuschel explained.

“Every time an employee goes to the doctor and incurs expenses, it hits their pocketbook, and it hits

our pocketbook by using insurance coverage,” she said. “By making health care more accessible, we can keep our employees healthy. It’s beneficial for everybody.”

In addition to on-site physical and mental health services, AriensCo offers a wide variety of health and wellness programming, too. These include nutrition education, yoga and Zumba classes. Not only does this provide an opportunity for employees to participate in free wellness programs, it’s a chance for people to connect. It even has employees compete in companywide competitions, such as the “Fitbit Beat the Boss” challenge.

“The Beat the Boss Challenge was probably the best challenge that we did last year, and we really took it to the highest level by involving all of our executive leadership team,” Tuschel said. “Employees were challenged to beat an executive

by logging more steps in a day than the executive. It was really a fun event and led to some great team building.”

AriensCo’s commitment to employees’ health isn’t just about physical health. Additional programs include such topics as All Things Wellness, Preventive Care, Financial Wellness and Mental Health. From workshops to wellness fairs to heart screenings, employees are provided with a wide variety of ways to stay informed and healthy at no cost to them. The HR team also provides internal training in mental health and first aid, which helps people identify and treat health issues.

“The breadth of programming and willingness to try new things to promote overall well-being among our employees speaks volumes about the culture and the company’s commitment to a healthy and happy workplace,” Tuschel concluded.

Three tips to promote health and wellness with your crew.

Health and Fitness Programs

One of the most popular wellness initiatives is health and fitness programs. These can include anything from gym memberships and exercise classes to health screenings and nutrition programs. Employers can offer incentives to employees who participate, such as discounts or bonuses for joining. Additionally, companies can easily challenge employees with things like workday step challenges to promote physical activity and have fun in the workplace.



Mental Health Support

To promote employee well-being, some companies prioritize mental health support. This can include access to counseling services, employee assistance programs or communities for Veterans and women. Monitoring mental health is equally important as physical, and creating a safe environment for employees to openly discuss mental health is essential to promoting company stability and strength.



Flexible Work Schedules

Offering flexible schedules has become increasingly popular in recent years. These arrangements have helped landscape companies to manage work-life balances. Companies that offer flexible work options often see increased employee engagement and productivity.





OUT WORKING'S

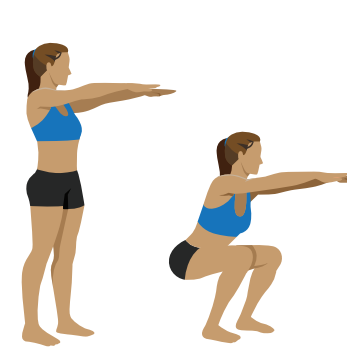
Guide to Working Out

We know what you're thinking: *I already spend my day doing physical labor, either out on the jobsite or hustling around the dealership.* That may be true, but repetitive physical movements can often lead to imbalances in the body that result in injuries and pain. For example, carrying heavy equipment all day taxes your biceps, chest and lower back. To counteract these effects, one can strengthen their shoulders, triceps and upper back.

We asked fitness expert Dontrel Whitfield, a certified personal trainer with a degree in exercise science and kinesiology, for advice on exercises that can contribute to a full-body conditioning routine — those which are most helpful for landscapers and equipment dealers. These various exercises and functional movements can improve biomechanics to promote strength, flexibility and endurance, making routine work easier while reducing the risk of injury.



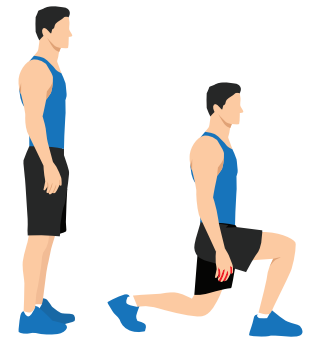
Dontrel Whitfield



1

Squats:

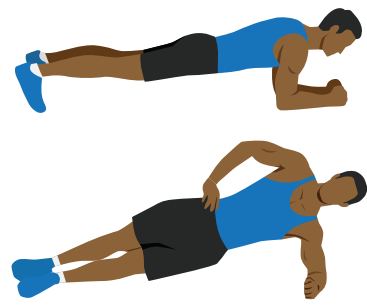
Squats are a great exercise for building leg and glute strength, which is essential for pushing a lawn mower or snow blower. Start with bodyweight squats then progress to dumbbells and barbells. Start by standing with legs shoulder width apart, then bend your knees and lower your body until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Hold this position for a few seconds then stand back up.



2

Lunges:

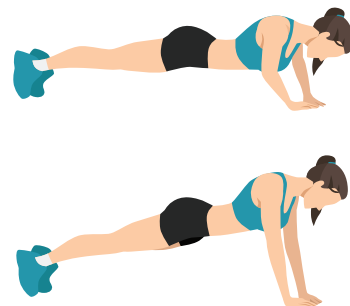
Like squats, lunges also target the glutes and legs, and can help improve balance and stability. Start with bodyweight lunges then progress to dumbbells and barbells. Stand with your feet hip-width apart, then take a big step with your right foot and lower your body until your right knee is at a 90-degree angle. Hold this position for a few seconds then stand back up and repeat with your left foot.



3

Planks:

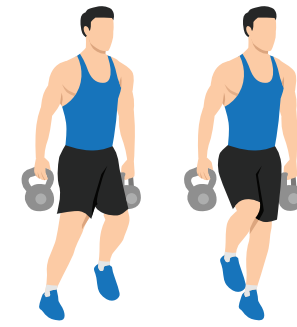
Planks are a great exercise for building core strength, which is very important for maintaining good posture while pushing a lawn mower or snow blower. Start by getting into a push-up position, then lowering your body so that your forearm is resting on the ground. If this is too difficult, you can do a high plank on your hands, or drop your knees to the floor and push your hips forward to relieve tension on your wrists. Squeezing your glutes is the key to engaging the core during this exercise!



4

Push-ups:

Push-ups are a great exercise for building upper body strength, which is important when moving equipment. Start by getting into a plank position with your arms and hands shoulder-width apart. Lower your body until your chest touches the ground, then push yourself back to the starting position. With this exercise, you can also drop your knees to the floor and push your hips forward to alleviate stress on the wrists.



6

Farmer's Walks:

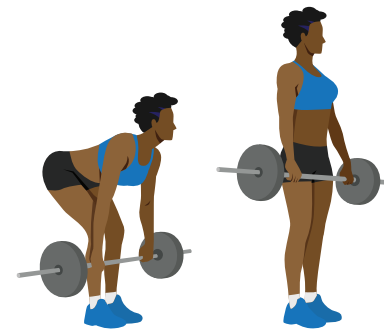
Farmer's walks involve walking with heavy weights, such as dumbbells or kettlebells, held in each hand. You can walk any length, up and down a hallway, gym floor, etc. This exercise can help improve grip strength, core stability and overall endurance. With dumbbells or kettlebells, walk forward taking small steps, embracing the core and moving the weights as little as possible. Continue doing this for 45 to 60 seconds then repeat.



WARM UP BEFORE AND STRETCH AFTER WORKOUT.



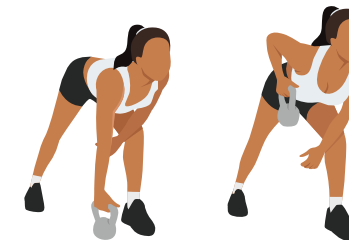
REMEMBER TO DRINK WATER, STAY HYDRATED.



5

Deadlifts:

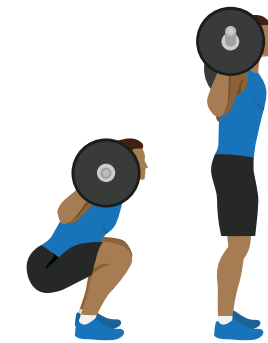
Deadlifts are a compound exercise that targets multiple muscle groups, including the legs, glutes and back. They can help improve overall strength and power, which is important when doing any type of physical labor. Stand with your knees slightly bent and feet placed shoulder-width apart. Make sure to bend the hips and knees, lowering the torso until it's almost parallel to the floor. Let the arms hang near your shins and the front of your knees, and keep your back in a neutral position. Don't round out the back! Slowly lower yourself then squeeze your glutes when you straighten, pushing through the ball and heel of your foot.



7

Bent-over Rows:

Bent-over rows are a compound exercise that works the back, shoulders, and arms. They can help improve overall upper body strength. For this exercise, bend your torso forward with your knees slightly bent. Pull your weights near your waist and squeeze the shoulder blades together. Lower your weights back down by your side and repeat.



8

Squat-to-Overhead Press:

This exercise combines a squat with an overhead press using a barbell or dumbbells. It targets the legs, glutes, shoulders and core, all of which are important for equipment uphill or even on uneven terrain. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart with dumbbells above your shoulders. Squat down while keeping your back flat and your knees over your toes. Push through your heels to return to standing while pressing the dumbbells overhead with arms fully extended. Return to the starting position and repeat.

Removing Limits

By Aaron Abler

**FOR THOSE WITH HEALTH ISSUES,
AN ARIENS SNO-THRO OFFERS
MORE THAN JUST TIME SAVINGS.**



It took Jameson MacInnis eight hours to shovel his driveway after the first snowfall of the 2018 - 2019 winter season. It wasn't a heavy snowfall, nor is MacInnis' driveway especially long, but the physical demands of shoveling snow can be daunting for someone living with a health condition.

Diagnosed with asthma as a child, physical activity like playing sports or competing with friends in pick-up basketball was a little more challenging for MacInnis. He needed a few more rests here and there, but he was never so exhausted that exercise would knock him to the ground. It wasn't until 2010 when he woke up on the floor of his office, surrounded by co-workers, that he realized a more serious issue was at play.

Prior to that, MacInnis didn't feel ill, wasn't performing strenuous activity and didn't experience any shortness of breath. But that day, his heart rate plunged to 30 beats per minute — much lower than the normal 60 to 100 beats per minute for a healthy 30-year-old.

"I felt completely normal, but they kept me overnight in the hospital, and my heart was going down to like six or seven beats per minute," MacInnis said.

After numerous tests and no conclusions, MacInnis' doctors ordered a heart MRI that revealed he had a complex issue known as left ventricular noncompaction cardiomyopathy, or LVNC, a rare form of heart disease.

"LVNC forms when you're in utero," MacInnis explained. "The left side of your heart never fully compacts in development — it stays like a sponge. Because of that, it doesn't squeeze as hard or pump as much blood."

Unknown to the medical community until after MacInnis was born, LVNC can cause breathlessness, fatigue and fainting, requiring patients to closely monitor their pulse and limit their physical activity. Outside of a heart transplant, there's no cure for LVNC, however, it is treatable with medications and devices. For MacInnis, a pacemaker controls the electrical signaling to his heart and acts as a defibrillator in the event of cardiac arrest.

"They put in a defibrillator so if my heart ever stopped, it would save my life. It has a couple of times," he said.

Life as a homeowner

Now 43, MacInnis has spent over 10 years not just managing LVNC but defying it. Endurance is challenging, but he can get through a non-cardio workout like strength training just as well as the next person. He has lost more than 100 pounds since that fateful day, which has since corrected his diabetes and relieved stress on his heart. That hard work and commitment also made it easier to fulfill the responsibilities of a newer homeowner, but with one exception.

"I'm pretty limited when it comes to anything requiring endurance or stamina," he said. "Luckily my house is fairly small and it's one floor so there are no stairs. Yard work may be challenging, but it's not nearly as bad as shoveling snow."

The winter of 2018 - 2019 was the first in which MacInnis had his own driveway in Bristol, Connecticut. It's a region where big snow, and clearing snowfalls, are inevitable. Only two memorable snowfalls fell that season, but even those were two that he could've done without. Proud and determined to clear his property, he shoveled the 60-foot-long driveway by himself, consuming two full days and

leaving him dangerously exhausted on both occasions.

"One time, it took me eight hours from start to finish. I had to take the day off from work. I would shovel for a few minutes, then my heart rate would get so high, and I would have to stop and lean up against my house until it went down."

Though MacInnis closely monitors his heart rate with an Apple Watch, there's nothing about shoveling wet, heavy snow that's easy or safe for those with heart disease. Unwilling to put his life at risk or waste an entire day clearing snow for another season, MacInnis started exploring his snow-clearing options. He asked a neighbor for a snow blower recommendation, and they suggested an Ariens Sno-Thro, leading MacInnis to his Deluxe 24.

"After just one snowfall, I quickly realized how the Ariens Sno-Thro dramatically improved my quality of life," MacInnis said. "Before, I had to call off of work on the days I shoveled. Being able to take 20 minutes to throw snow and still have time to come into work and have a cup of coffee was game-changing."

The time savings is a benefit quickly realized by all first-time Sno-Thro users. For those at elevated risk for heart attack and stroke, it's a lifesaver. Vasoconstriction, or the narrowing of blood vessels, can occur in cold temperatures, lead to heightened blood pressure and create hazardous situations. According to the American Journal of Emergency Medicine, shoveling snow is responsible for as many as 770 cardiovascular emergencies in the United States each year.

According to MacInnis, removing this stressful work has been a huge relief.

"It's peace of mind," he said. "When your heart rate gets high in cold air, less oxygen goes to your heart. And if your heart isn't strong, that's not a good environment to put it through the wringer."

For health, time, or both, the most valuable attribute of MacInnis' Sno-Thro is the independence it provides and the empowerment that follows. Whether it's a garden-variety snowfall or the next nor'easter, the weather events that once stirred anxieties are now no concern.

"My Ariens Sno-Thro makes me feel like I live a normal life." ■

Conservation Acceleration

AriensCo launched a major conservation effort in 2020. Three years into the project, the company is making incredible strides in restoring native ecosystems and wildlife.



AriensCo has a long history of conservation efforts, starting with the dedication of the Mike Ariens Run for Life Trail in 2008. The company joined the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) in 2017 and in 2020 it earned a prestigious WHC Certification for conserving and restoring 150 acres of native habitat at its headquarters in Brillion, Wisconsin.

Two years later, the work is not only continuing — it is expanding. AriensCo has reclaimed an additional 50 acres of farmland adjacent to Stone Prairie, an AriensCo Hospitality outdoor event space that sits on the site of the initial conservation effort. The land is being converted to a mix of prairie, marshes and forest, and a wide range of wildlife proliferation efforts are also underway. This phase of the project expands the total grounds to 200 acres of preserved land.

“The first phase of the AriensCo conservation project was very successful. It proved that as a company, we can embark on ambitious projects and see great results,” said Ann Stilp, executive program manager. “We have seen a tremendous amount of plant and animal wildlife thrive in the area, including rare and endangered species. This gives us great confidence to expand the area and restore an additional 50 acres of land.”



An endangered rust patched bumble bee was spotted at AriensCo's conservation grounds.

Convert and conserve

AriensCo has owned the 50 acres under restoration for decades (area “A” on the map). The land was used as farmland, where either soy or corn was grown, to maintain the land and keep invasive species at bay. It’s now in the process of being converted to conservation land, which involves seeding the area with native plants and mulching with soybean debris. Soon, oak trees will be planted, and the land will once again become a prairie oak savanna. This unique habitat once thrived in the U.S. Midwest but is currently in peril.

Oak trees are dominant in a prairie oak savanna habitat. They thrive in an otherwise lightly forested grassland that provides a plethora of plant and animal diversity. The trees include white oak and bur oak, mixed with grass and wildflowers, such as short wildflower prairie, medium wildflower prairie, tallgrass prairie, savanna prairie and

wet prairie. Eventually, the land will be home to more than 100 species of wildflowers, grasses, sedges, rushes and legumes.

The addition of two marshes to the new parcel of prairie oak savanna distinguishes it from the remaining conservation land. Workers dug shallow marshes to about 3.5 feet (area “G” on the map). This depth was selected to attract reptiles, amphibians and birds. This marshland will filter water, improve drainage along the prairie and play host to plant and animal life. Some 4,000 aquatic plants are being planted around the marsh’s edges.

“Establishing marshes in the conservation area expands the opportunity for biodiversity and the capability to support a wider variety of plant and animal life,” Stilp said. “Once we gain experience with our first marsh and see success, we envision duplicating those efforts throughout the conservation grounds.”



ARIENS|CO CONSERVATION PLANNING

- Planning Zone Area Boundary
- Potential Trail Extension 1 (0.25 mi)
Timeline: Spring/Summer 2021
- Potential Trail Extension 3 (0.17 mi)
Timeline: Spring/Summer 2021
- Potential Trail Extension 4 - Mowed (1.27 mi)
- Forested Wetland Restoration
Timeline: 2023-2024
Estimated Total Acreage: 2.7
- Prairie and Prairie Oak Savanna
Timeline: 2023-2024
Estimated Total Acreage: 5.4
- Wet Prairie
Timeline: 2023-2024
Acreage: 0.6
- Upland Forest Restoration
Timeline: 2023-2024
Estimated Total Acreage: 29.7
- Deep Marsh
Timeline: 2023-2024
Estimated Total Acreage: 0.2
- Forest Enhancement
Timeline: 2021-2028
Estimated Total Acreage: 35.0
- Existing Plant Community Restorations**
- Mesic Prairie Oak Savanna
Acreage: 73.2
- Wet to Wet-Mesic Prairie Oak Savanna
Acreage: 4.4
- Upland Forest
Acreage: 9.2
- Forested Wetland
Acreage: 0.9
- Deep Marsh Creation
Acreage: 1.2
- Existing Trail - 2.80 miles

Citizen science

Employees working as part of the conservation team are actively contributing to “citizen science” efforts at the primary Stone Prairie site, for which anyone can be trained to collect and submit data on plants and animal species. This includes tagging monarch butterflies to track their migration — 50 were tagged in the fall of 2022 — and photographing bumble bees. This information is then submitted to various groups, such as the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources or dedicated wildlife organizations. This further aids in proliferation efforts, particularly those of endangered species.

AriensCo’s conservation efforts appear to be working — and worth it. A rusty patched bumble bee was recently spotted, which is listed as Federally Endangered, extremely rare in Wisconsin and globally imperiled. Volunteers have additionally identified 32 native butterfly species on the grounds. This is primarily due to a focus on planting specific host and nectar plants that enable them to prosper.

Avian efforts are one of the most important projects on the property. There are 16 cavity nest boxes on the grounds that employees monitor. Bob Ring, a tool and die maker and member of the team, is qualified to “band birds,” which involves putting aluminum, numbered bands on birds’ legs. This helps gather data that is used in scientific research and conservation efforts, such as dispersal, migration, behavioral and survival rate information.

“The wildlife efforts at Stone Prairie have been a success. Not only are conservation team members passionate about providing an ample ecosystem for these animals to thrive in, but they have taken extra steps to become real citizen scientists that can contribute to the greater survival of a species,” Stilp explained. “It’s thrilling to see rare and endangered species make a return to the area and flourish once again.”



AriensCo team member Victoria Marquardt volunteers in a citizen science effort to track wildlife on the grounds.

CERTIFIED GOLD

AriensCo has received re-certification from the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) for its conservation efforts, this time at Certified Gold status on four projects. The WHC empowers companies to advance biodiversity, sustainability, employee engagement and community relations goals.

WHC Certification is based on several criteria including best management practices, monitoring and data collection, and alignment to local and state wildlife initiatives. AriensCo’s four projects — Prairie Oak Savanna, Forest, Bluebird/Tree Swallow and Bumblebee — are all designated as Certified Gold. WHC Certification recognizes long-term commitment to environmental stewardship, as companies must demonstrate continuous improvement in their habitat management plans and undergo recertification every three years.

WHC certification is not just about achieving a certification status. It is about making a long-term commitment to environmental stewardship. WHC-certified corporations must demonstrate continuous improvement in their habitat management plans and undergo recertification every three years. Recertification is a testament to the company’s dedication to promoting biodiversity and protecting wildlife habitats in the communities where they operate.

“When we set out to earn our WHC certification, we knew it would be a lasting commitment to restore and preserve the prairie oak savannah at Stone Prairie,” said AriensCo Chairman and CEO Dan Ariens. “Our goal is to protect this land and the plant and animal life that calls it home for many generations to come. Achieving WHC Gold Certification is a significant milestone, and it reflects our deep resolve for this project’s enduring success.”





RAZOR SHARP LINEUP

WITH THE REINTRODUCTION OF 21-INCH WALK-BEHIND MOWERS, ARIENS FITS LARGE AND SMALL YARDS IN ALL SEASONS.

By Aaron Abler

For customers familiar with Ariens lawn products, the sight of a bright orange mower draws an immediate connection to quality craftsmanship. That reputation, built through the brand's 90 years, has a strong influence over homeowners' purchasing decisions — if the product makes sense for the yard size.

Ariens has long offered a wide range of zero-turn models for larger yards, but for the 80% of homeowners with lots smaller than 1 acre, the excitement of bringing home part of the brand's 90-year legacy wasn't possible until now. With the reintroduction of the RAZOR, a series of 21-inch walk-behind mowers, Ariens expands to yards of all sizes everywhere.

"We're excited to be back in the 'walk' business," said Andy Massignan, director of product for the residential market at AriensCo. "Our 21-inch walk mowers were designed by the AriensCo team from the ground up, using every bit of knowledge to

create a premium product for those who may never need to step up to a zero-turn mower."

That design experience is on full display in the feature-driven versatility and thoughtful touchpoints across RAZOR's four-model lineup. Comfort grips on the front-wheel-drive model eliminate pinch points and reduce hand tension, and grips on all models' height-of-cut adjusters allow users to quickly and easily change cutting height from one inch to four inches.

Buyers also have an option for REFLEX speed control technology, a self-propelled feature that matches the speed of the operator.

"REFLEX integrates the drive controls into the handlebar," Massignan said. "All the user needs to do is grab the handlebar and start walking to make the mower drive forward. It's part of a combination of features that helps our customers take the work out of yard work."

RAZOR also has options for vertical storage that takes up less space, dual-blade technology that atomizes clippings into fine mulch and ball-bearing wheels for durable, easy maneuverability. Standard features include a three-in-one design that gives users the choice to bag clippings, mulch or rear-discharge. They also have Briggs & Stratton engines and a strong 5.5-inch-deep steel deck that promotes a strong airflow to lift, cut and discharge grass evenly and leave a smooth, carpet-like finish. Class-leading three- or four-year warranties round out the offering.

"Features and attractive styling are great selling points, but our focus is on how those elements influence the user experience and performance," Massignan said. "We're here to help our customers accomplish an objective, and that's crafting a beautiful outdoor living space to enjoy with your friends, family and neighbors. The RAZOR does that in less time and with less effort."

SCREEN TIME



Digital screens on Gravelly's EV mowers save time for operators and dealers. They also help AriensCo build a better product for the future.

By Aaron Ablar

Electrified outdoor power equipment is changing the landscaping industry, and quickly. Beyond the obvious improvements — convenient powering, fewer emissions, simplified maintenance — electric vehicles create a platform for other innovations. New digital screens that provide real-time operating data and diagnostic information are one of the most significant advancements on the Gravelly Pro-Stance EV and Pro-Turn EV. The screens are constantly evolving and provide valuable intelligence to operators and technicians alike.

"The features on the display screen started with feedback from the field," said Brett Bogenschutz, senior platform manager for EV Products at AriensCo. "The advent of the battery age has made some operators and technicians uneasy because it's a completely new ballgame, so we used their input to help guide our design and flatten the learning curve for them. Their feedback helped us build a machine that's easy to use, understand and service."

Though these new systems might be perceived as complex — which is true, they're very advanced —

the user interface is simple. Through the CAN bus (Controller Area Network) and the easy-to-use display screen, information is available at the fingertips of users and service technicians, bridging the gap between man and machine.

"Think of the CAN bus as the communication network," Bogenschutz said. "It allows the VCM (Vehicle Control Module) and other electrical components to talk with each other. It transmits signals from the controls to the electric motors, but it also receives information back from those systems."

That feedback is communicated through three screens on a 4.2-inch LCD monitor in the control panel. In normal conditions, operators have access to the home screen that shows machine status and the overall charge, a power screen that shows individual battery charge levels and a maintenance screen that shows fault and warning codes. There are also other screens for special conditions.

Everything you need to mow

The Home Screen displays the system's overall state-of-charge (SOC). It also indicates if the unit is Live-to-Drive, the blade status, the parking brake status and a low-battery warning icon.



“The display also has a **balance screen** that appears when the battery packs auto-adjust to near-equal states-of-charge, a **steering sensor calibration screen** that dealers use to dial-in the tracking, and a **charge screen** that displays a countdown to full when charging the batteries in-unit,” Bogenschutz explained.

In the field, operators can view the machine’s total runtime, warnings for non-normal operating conditions, and most importantly, the amount of juice left in the proverbial tank. Like a fuel gauge, this shows the remaining charge so operators can return to the truck and swap in a fresh set of FusionCore batteries. It’s an invaluable tool on the jobsite, but it has just as much appreciation in the service shop.

When a fault or warning occurs, the maintenance screen displays a yellow or red icon (red for fault, yellow for warning) and the system generates a five-digit code. This code represents the specific location of the issue, the affected component and other various details. It provides immediate clarity that enables service technicians to pinpoint the problem and work to activate a solution protocol immediately.

“Our technology helps take the guesswork out of troubleshooting,” said Tyler Kovac, master technician manager at AriensCo. “This saves our dealer technicians a ton of time in diagnosing faults and warnings, and it provides pinpoint accuracy in determining the next steps needed to get operators up and running much faster.”

Saving time is a welcome benefit for power equipment dealerships in short supply of skilled technicians. Lowering the knowledge barrier for servicing electric vehicles makes shops more versatile. It also comes in handy for an operator scratching their head over an issue on the jobsite, as they are able to obtain their own diagnostic information.

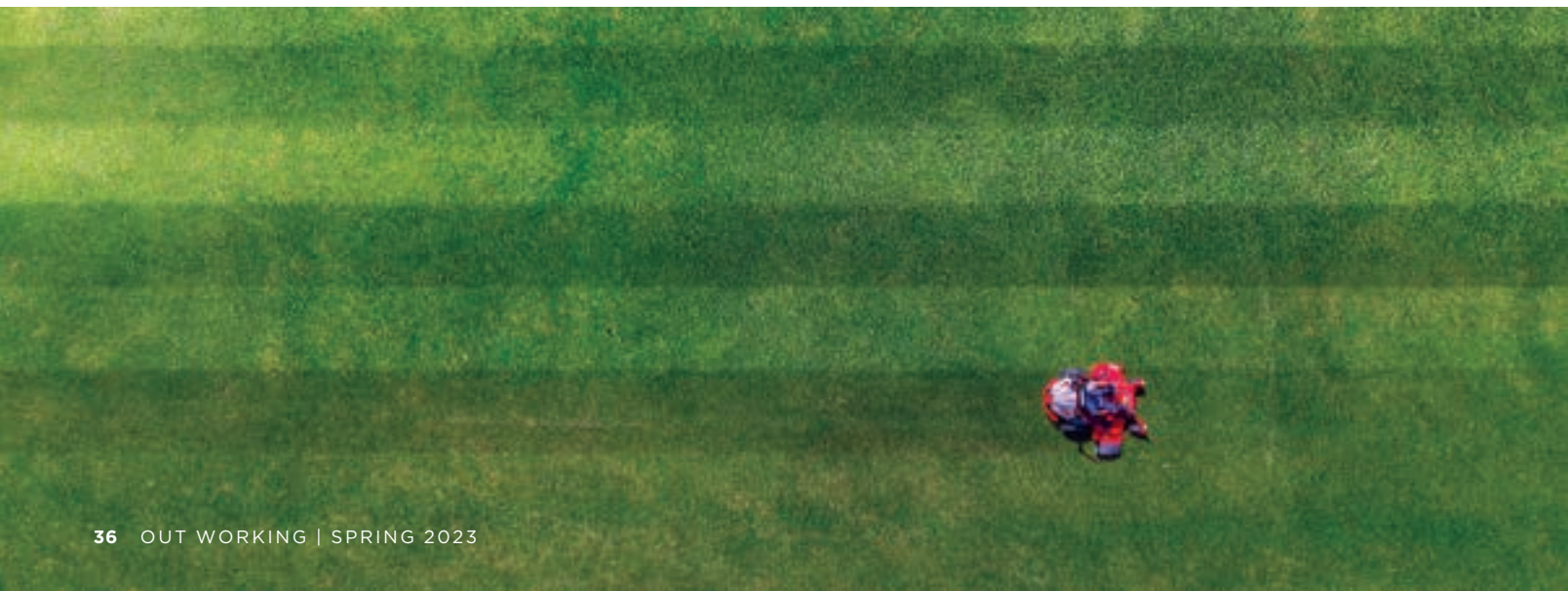
“Access to the fault and warning codes through the display screen eliminates the need for a special diagnostic tool,” Bogenschutz said. “Anybody can toggle to the maintenance screen, refer to the trouble codes in the operator’s manual and relay the information to a dealer. It’s not a guarantee, but depending on the type of fault or warning, dealers may be able to guide an operator to simple fixes over the phone.”

Like a flight data recorder in airplanes, the technology also keeps a log of the machine’s most recent fault warnings, as well as the exact time the trouble occurred. That information can be shared with AriensCo for further analysis to learn if design improvements are needed.

“Voice of customer combined with technical evaluations are already influencing enhancements,” Bogenschutz said. “Toggle through the screens of our very first EV digital displays compared to one with the most current software and you’ll see new features, like serial numbers above each battery on the power screen or an Eco Mode indicator. It’s through that commitment to continuous improvement that we take a great product and make it even better for our customers.”

“Our technology helps take the guesswork out of troubleshooting.”

- TYLER KOVAC, MASTER TECHNICIAN MANAGER AT ARIENSCO



No range anxiety with this view

The Power Screen displays the individual charge levels of each battery, their serial numbers and a power bar showing available power.



Taking the guesswork out of troubleshooting

The Maintenance Screen displays fault and warning codes, if they occur.



Counting down to your next mow

The Charge Screen appears when the unit is plugged into an electrical outlet and shows the estimated countdown to a full charge.

33 Objects

By Ann Stilp

2023 marks AriensCo's 90th anniversary. To celebrate the milestone, the AriensCo Museum dug into its archives and chose "33 Objects" that reflect the company's rich history. Often, these artifacts show that it's not just manufacturing history that AriensCo has played an important role in, but also the forging of America itself.



Four Million in Brillion

Ariens hit a major milestone in 2018, producing its 4-millionth Sno-Thro. The achievement came some 58 years after the first unit revolutionized residential snow clearing. The actual 4-millionth unit resides in the AriensCo Museum, and it pays homage to its birthplace of Brillion, Wisconsin, with a special black paint scheme that is overlaid with a topographical map of the city.



Leon's Adding Machine

Like most companies, AriensCo was not immune to the Great Depression. Henry Ariens lost his company, the Brillion Iron Works, during the turmoil. This inspired him and his sons, Mando, Leon and Francis, to launch AriensCo. With memories of tough times still fresh, Leon closely tracked the young company's finances using this Monroe "computer."



Allegiance to Ariens

Ariens snowmobile fanatics showed their loyalty to the brand with a "Track 'em down" snake patch woven into their snow gear from the mid-1960s to early '70s. The clever design of the patch enabled enthusiasts to stand out amongst alternate snowmobiling clubs. These clubs organized rides, mapped routes and advocated for trail access when snowmobiles were all the rage.

BEST-IN-CLASS PHOTOS

Spring is sprung in the Northern Hemisphere! Here are some of the finest shots of our mowers cutting lawns across the globe.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
 American Pride Lawn Care (Bristol, Connecticut) @americanpridelawn;
 AS-Motor (Bühlertann, Germany) @asmotorworldwide; Randy Johnson (Cincinnati, Ohio) @ranplan; Border Patrol Grounds Maintenance (Derbyshire, England) @borderpatrolderby; Garden Machines Northampton Ltd (Northampton, England) @gardenmachinesltd; Mowin' Owen RVA (Richmond, Virginia) @mowinowenrva; Pena's Landscape (Port St. Lucie, Florida) @penaslandscapeff; Yards Unlimited (Dothan, Alabama) @yardsunlimitedllc



PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
ARIENS COMPANY



PRO-TURN® 600



PRO-TURN® ZX



PRO-STANCE®



ZT XL



Axis™

OUR FAMILY TREE

It must have deep roots. How else could it support all these branches? The Gravely brand keeps growing and growing. That's what happens when you keep up with the demands of your customers. Commercial, residential, stand-ons, utility, electric, this is a prolific family of products with an unmatched pedigree.

GRAVELY.

OUT WORKING

FALL 2023 | VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 2



INTERNATIONAL FOCUS

Yaros expands in Spain and Portugal



DEALER PROFILE

Burke's Outdoor Equipment shows tremendous growth

ARIENSCO UPDATE

The launch of Henry's Parts and Equipment



THE MOWER THAT TAKES THE OBSTACLES OUT OF MOWING



OVIS
40RC

Built like a tank and equipped with an endless appetite, the Gravely **OVIS 40 RC** lets you mow where traditional on-board-operator equipment couldn't – or even shouldn't. Its low center of gravity delivers high expectations. Thanks to its powerful flail-style mowing mechanism, it chews through any type of tall, overgrown grass – even thick stalks. The best way to mow a high, overgrown, slippery inclines is from a safe distance with OVIS.

GRAVELY

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EST. 1933

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A number of trade and brand names appear in *Out Working*. For ease of design, these are displayed without their superscript or subscript symbols. The most common names are: Ariens, Gravely, RapidCare, Kohler and Kawasaki.

RapidTrak is TM. Sno-Thro and APEX are registered.

Written and designed by:



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Best-in-class photos

Welcome



For this issue of *Out Working*, I sat down to interview my dad, AriensCo Chairman and CEO Dan Ariens. 2023 holds several anniversaries for him – 40 years working for AriensCo and 25 of them as CEO. We had this conversation in a special place, an exhibit in the AriensCo Museum that recreates the garage of his great-grandfather, which is where the company began. We reflected on the company's history, its current place in the industry, and what the future may have in store (page 18).

In 1933, Henry Ariens could not have guessed where the company he created would be 90 years later. What was once a small business, started in Brillion, Wisconsin, during the Great Depression has expanded into an international powerhouse. This issue of *Out Working* is dedicated to AriensCo's 90th anniversary and all the people who have contributed to making the company a success.

Over nine decades, AriensCo and its employees have adapted to historic changes in technology and manufacturing, as well as a rapidly changing social and economic fabric. We have a unique family of brands that includes Ariens, Gravely and AS-Motor that provide a diverse set of landscaping solutions for people all over the world. With our RapidCare division and new Henry's Parts & Service business, we are raising the industry's standards for supporting equipment dealers.

This 90th anniversary is underscored by the fact that AriensCo works in an ecosystem that includes thousands of outdoor power equipment distributors and dealerships, and thousands more landscaping companies that depend on our products. In short, our success is not ours alone. In this issue, we check in with equipment dealer Burke's Outdoor Equipment (page 6), landscaping and retail provider Dennis' 7 Dees (page 12), and international equipment distributor Yaros (page 24). All of these companies have great lessons to teach in how to grow and expand a company while providing the utmost in customer service.

AriensCo appreciates your support and friendship over the years. Like it was for Henry 90 years ago, it is hard for us to guess what the future holds. There is one thing we can be sure of, though – we will get there together.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Ariens
President and Chief Operating Officer



ARIENS|CO NEWS:

Mechanically inclined

AriensCo is committed to exposing future outdoor equipment aficionados to STEM subjects and equipment manufacturing. As part of these efforts, the company invited 6-year-old outdoor power equipment and small-engine enthusiast, Riley, to the AriensCo Museum.

While most kids at Riley's age would select a candy shop or toy store to visit, his intellectual curiosity led him to expand his knowledge of power equipment and become a friend to AriensCo. He traveled with his family to Brillion, Wisconsin, to tour the Ariens Sno-Thro factory, check out vintage Ariens equipment and meet with AriensCo leadership.

"We thought it would be an educational experience for Riley, but as it turns out, we didn't teach him much that he didn't already know," said Aaron Abler, corporate communications and PR manager at AriensCo. "He has quite the mechanical aptitude and could even identify a carburetor and explain how it works!"



Wisconsin top stop

AriensCo Chairman and CEO Dan Ariens hosted Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers and Wisconsin Department of Tourism secretary-designee Anne Sayers on a tour of the AriensCo Museum in the spring. He showed the officials how the company is investing in its home city of Brillion, Wisconsin.

The group made the trip to AriensCo as part of its tour of northeast Wisconsin's "top stops" for National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW). AriensCo showed off its state-of-the-art manufacturing facility, its rich design and engineering history and its efforts to boost STEM education. The officials also were able to see other AriensCo attractions, like Ariens Nordic Center and Round Lake Farms.

"We're continuing to grow and invest in our community, and that includes investing in Brillion as a destination to visit, experience and stay," said Ann Stilp, executive program manager at AriensCo.



Remote control

AriensCo's German team, AS-Motor, collaborated with the Fraunhofer Institute for Transportation and Infrastructure Systems IVI, along with Sensor-Technik Wiedemann, at this year's demopark in Hörselberg, Germany. At Europe's largest open-air exhibition for the green sector, the companies presented an automated, remotely controlled and networked lawn mower fleet of AS-Motor high grass mowers.

The lineup included three AS 940 Sherpa 4WD RC mowers that feature a control tower software called helyOS® (highly efficient online yard Operating System). The technology acts as a central hub for connecting, controlling and monitoring fleets of machines via a local network or the cloud.

Once available only for trucks and agricultural machinery, fleet owners can now network and control their Sherpa lawn mowers, tripling productivity and reducing worker fatigue. What's more, they can activate their mower fleet in the field, or remotely, such as from another job site or the home office.



Best show in snow

The Ariens Snow team exhibited at the Snow & Ice Management Association's (SIMA) 26th Annual Snow & Ice Symposium in Hartford, Connecticut, to discuss all things snow and share the company's latest equipment offerings with the commercial snow removal industry.

The trade show featured more than 130 exhibitors showcasing the latest and greatest winter outdoor equipment, which enabled suppliers to connect and learn about industry innovations. Ariens highlighted its MAMMOTH stand-on tractor and snow removal machine, an extremely versatile piece of equipment that utilizes various attachments for diverse types of jobs.

"June is the prime time for commercial snow removal teams to begin preparation for the winter and start a discussion around efficient snow removal. Acquiring the right equipment early in the year will ensure they are prepped and ready for the first snowfall," said Nik Krueger, snow product manager at AriensCo.



Renewing and remembering

Nearly 500 landscape and lawn care experts traveled from across the country in July to participate in the annual Renewal & Remembrance event at Arlington National Cemetery and the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The event is hosted by the NALP (National Association of Landscape Professionals).

Volunteers had the opportunity to donate their time and expertise, such as installing woodchips around tree stands near the Washington Monument and Tidal Basin, as well as renovating turf near the Washington Monument. Work at Arlington National Cemetery included top dressing turf, restoring irrigation, installing lightning protection on designated trees, and various hardscape and landscape installation projects.

"Landscape and lawn care professionals love to give back, and the annual Renewal & Remembrance event allows them to use their horticulture skills to care for some of America's most important green spaces," said NALP CEO Britt Wood.



New event honors Mike Ariens

The inaugural Mike Ariens Run/Walk took place August 19 with 175 participants hitting the trails! The event remembered and honored one of the most important leaders in AriensCo history. The community event was presented by AriensCo in Brillion, Wisconsin, to promote health, wellness and community.

The event featured a route along the Mike Ariens "Trail of Life," AriensCo conservation land, downtown Brillion and the trail system at Ariens Nordic Center. All ages and levels were welcome to enjoy the distance of their choosing: 10K, 5K or a Kids 1K Fun Run.

Mike loved to run and always wore a bucket hat. He also loved ice cream! To this day, AriensCo employees remember Mike every year on his birthday with an ice cream celebration. Every participant and volunteer received a Mike Ariens Run/Walk bucket hat and enjoyed an ice cream treat at the finish line celebration. Save the date for the 2024 Mike Ariens Run/Walk planned for August 17 in Brillion, Wisconsin.



BURKE'S *Outdoor Equipment*

GRAVELY

ECHO

BURKE'S
Outdoor Equipment

New Management

Three years of phenomenal growth at Burke's Outdoor Equipment reflects a successful business strategy that has culminated with a grand reopening of its new building.

DEALER PROFILE

By Julia Shrader

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in April, Burke's Outdoor Equipment (Burke's) celebrated one of the strongest business runs the company had seen since launching out of a garage in 1963. Over a thousand local Hoosiers came out to experience the grand reopening of Burke's, getting a first glimpse of the company's brand-new building in Valparaiso, Indiana.

It was a milestone moment for Dave and Nadine Brown, who purchased the company in January 2020 and set it on a path for three years of unabated growth. Thanks to new digital advertising strategies, workforce development and business modernization efforts, Burke's was able to capitalize on surging population demographics in its region and dramatically increase its revenue.

The new Burke's facility signals that the company has a proven history of success and is well-posed for future growth. Its revenue is approaching \$4 million and is expected to continue on an upward trajectory.

"Since re-opening Burke's doors, the amount of business has skyrocketed," said Dave Brown, president of Burke's. "Our relaunch was covered by multiple local news channels and a radio station. There were in-store equipment sales, and we even gave away a brand-new Ariens mower to one lucky customer. Since that day in

Dave and Nadine Brown.

April, we tend to roughly 100 customers every day, ready to either purchase their first piece of equipment from Burke's or continue their business with us."

Strategic intentions

Burke's serves a diverse customer base around Valparaiso, which in some ways is a suburb of Chicago. It includes homeowners, churches, municipalities and professional landscaping companies. The dealership exclusively sells Ariens and Gravelly zero-turn mowers (as of 2019) and offers a wide variety of other products, including handheld equipment, snow equipment and lawn care machines.

"Burke's made the switch to selling solely AriensCo equipment from a service perspective because it's easier for mechanics to focus on a single brand of high-quality equipment," Brown said. "The heart and soul of our business today is Ariens and Gravelly products, and we don't see that changing."

Brown comes from a background in commercial real estate, an industry that thrives on working with small business owners. In fact, Brown and his wife were looking for real estate opportunities when they came across Burke's. The company had already been in business for nearly 60 years when Brown took the helm, and it was well known for its focus on excellent customer service.



Burke's exclusively sells Ariens and Gravelly zero-turn lawn mowers.

"We were searching for market opportunities from a real estate perspective and opportunities to invest in businesses that were well established, and that's when we came across Burke's," Brown said. "We did our due diligence on the company from a financial, product and operational perspective, and we were impressed to learn that it was a solidly built business."

Brown's real estate experience also taught him one of the golden rules for a brick-and-mortar business — location, location, location. He viewed Burke's as a strategic investment in a rapidly growing region of northwest Indiana.

"The market was beginning to explode, as dozens of people in their early 20s and 30s were relocating to the area. Each day, nearly 80,000 cars pass the highway that is located only 40 yards from the facility's front door. It has been our best investment to date," he said.

The timing was great. Brown acquired the company just before the pandemic began, and in April 2020, sales began to skyrocket. The business grew 35% in 2020 and rose another 35% in 2021. But this scenario wouldn't last forever. Brown knew the business needed to be strategic to continue to grow.

Brown says achieving the "next big thing" in a marketplace requires careful, strategic thinking.

"If you want to expand, begin by evaluating your facilities and reimagining your business. That is critical for future success," he explained.

Building on its core foundation — renowned products and excellent customer service — Brown sought to modernize Burke's. The company first focused on staff development and new hiring strategies to ensure it had a team that could position the company to grow.

"Burke's added five new team members to ensure the facility was adequately staffed," Brown said. "We wanted to bring in new talent. We placed a hiring ad banner outside the facility while it was under construction, and word quickly spread about the new facility throughout our region, bringing in new mechanical expertise."

The new Burke's now has roughly 10 employees and adds up to five more during the busy season.

He added that maintaining a well-equipped and climate-controlled service shop is key to attracting top-tier talent. Burke's ensures its team members are well-trained, understanding the ins and outs of the company's product lines and how to sell against competing brands.

Employees are also required to complete online training through Ariens Academy, which furthers their sales knowledge and enables mechanics to be proficient in repairing Burke's equipment.



With a solid team in place, Burke's focused on its next step to streamline the company: digitalization. The business was still operating old-school in 2020, issuing handwritten tickets to customers and focusing advertising efforts on the Yellow Pages. Brown immediately digitized the business — in terms of advertising and company operations.

Brown was able to more effectively communicate and reach a wider range of people who consistently utilized popular, varied social media platforms, in turn, growing its customer base. Burke's turned away from handwritten customer tickets and implemented a POS (point of sale) system that enabled the business to accept customer payments and track sales digitally.

For advertising, the company launched a new website, added social media channels that included Facebook and Instagram, started radio advertising and began strategically sending text blasts to customers. The text blasts are primarily used to promote equipment and sales but are also used for service specials and dealership events, like the grand re-opening of Burke's.

Through these combined efforts, the company succeeded in welcoming a new, younger generation of customers, all while carefully tending to its original, loyal customers, ensuring they remain satisfied, too.

"Burke's continues to develop and grow, and a large part of that begins and ends with our customer base. It's exciting working with such a diverse crowd and meeting so many different types of people who are interested in equipment that our facility has to offer," Brown said.

New headquarters

Brown realized there were other opportunities to grow and improve. He and his wife wanted to build something grand, and he had a vision.

"We wanted to consolidate our operations into an eye-catching new facility that would draw attention. We envisioned the building to be open and airy, with a

beautiful glass storefront that stood out to everyone that drove by. We used a primary red color that turns heads without being tacky," Brown explained.

A state-of-the-art 22,000+ square-foot building was constructed, equipped with a full in-store parts and service center. Ariens and Gravely mowers, as well as Ariens Sno-Thro models, are on display in its large showroom.

Burke's also added products that it didn't traditionally carry but would augment its offerings in new and appealing ways. This included well-known ranges of coolers and grills. Brown said that adding the products is very important to the success of the business. By strategically enhancing successful equipment lines and introducing new products that fit the evolving customer base, brand awareness and product demand increase.

"We aren't looking to compete with big box retailers by implementing new product lines. Rather, we want to reaffirm our customers' high opinions of our products, offering innovative and upscale products that match the quality of what you see with the rest of the AriensCo products. The goal is to keep up to date with the current wants and needs of our marketplace and provide an overall better experience at Burke's."

Brown has strong reason to believe that by operating out of a new and improved building and expanding the company's product offerings, the customer base will continue to grow, particularly with younger generations.

All of these changes at Burke's are helping the company reach new levels of success. Brown is happy to report that the support of AriensCo has been a contributing factor, too. The Burke and Ariens families worked together for decades before the Browns took over. He said a positive relationship has also developed with his family.

"The people at AriensCo are very down to earth but have a competitive drive. It is a company that wants to win," he explained. "Make no mistake, we've invested in Burke's in the same way. We strive to be winners in our market, too." ■



"We aren't looking to compete with big box retailers by implementing new product lines. Rather, we want to reaffirm our customers' high opinions of our products."

— DAVE BROWN, PRESIDENT OF BURKE'S OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

Well Beyond **LANDSCAPING**

DENNIS' 7 DEES HAS SEEN CONSTANT GROWTH OVER A REMARKABLE SEVEN DECADES BY CONTINUALLY EXPANDING ITS OFFERINGS INTO ONE OF THE WIDEST RANGES OF LANDSCAPING AND PLANT SERVICES IN THE COUNTRY.



LANDSCAPER FOCUS

By Julia Shrader

The Pacific Northwest is home to a lush landscape of naturally rolling hills, mossy trees, colorful flowers and thick wet grass. With healthy rainfall totals and a temperate climate, it's one of the U.S.'s most vibrantly green regions.

Therefore, it's only fitting that Dennis' 7 Dees is one of the Pacific Northwest's most vibrant landscaping companies — and a whole lot more. The family-owned company is headquartered in Portland, Oregon, with garden centers in Cedar Hills, Lake Oswego, Seaside, Bridgeport Village and Vancouver. Across these locations, the company has plant nurseries and a retail plant shop that range in size and sell a wide variety of indoor and outdoor plants, as well as home décor and gifts.

Along with their retail spaces, Dennis' 7 Dees offers a variety of landscaping services that include residential and commercial landscape construction, maintenance services, urban plantscapes, design and décor for office and hospitality spaces, as well as design and décor for the holidays. The company has a stellar reputation, an easily recognizable brand and a large, varied customer base in the region. It has amassed dozens of excellence awards since it was founded in 1956.

(Dennis' 7 Dees gets its name from Robert Snodgrass, the company's founder. It's an eponym for his seven children, all with "D" names. In fact, three of his sons own the company today: David, Dean and Drew. David serves as president of the company, with Dean and Drew as vice presidents.)

"Most landscaping companies will have one or two specialties. Dennis' 7 Dees is different. We offer a range of retail and landscape service offerings for our customers," said Nathan Dirksen, COO of the company. "Whether we are crafting yard design ideas together with a homeowner, planting hardscapes for an elementary school or carefully curating and planting a high-end hotel's entryway, we do it all very well."

Dirksen has been with Dennis' 7 Dees for 35 years and oversees divisions that include revenue, accounting, marketing, HR, IT and management. Dirksen says the company's goal is to create a "customer for life" and enable the company to serve as a well-rounded resource for residential homes and commercial businesses.



Dennis' 7 Dees sells indoor and outdoor plants, home décor and gifts at its garden centers.

The company offers a range of retail and landscape services for its customers.



Over his tenure, Dirksen says the company has steadily grown and is now bringing in some \$42 million in revenue each year. He attributes this success to the company's focus on the continual expansion of its products and services, for both residential and commercial customers.

"When I first started at Dennis' 7 Dees, there were about 35 people on board that dedicated their services strictly to landscaping for residential customers," he explained. "Over time, we've acquired commercial customers with larger and larger sized properties, opened retail

garden centers, started our interior plant division and much more."

With so many locations and services offered, Dennis' 7 Dees has been able to capitalize on its expansion to build a trusted and recognizable brand. Retail customers are enticed to utilize the company's landscaping services, and landscaping customers, in turn, become retail customers for plants, décor and gifts. Commercial customers trust the company for their residential needs and vice versa.

Essentially, Dennis 7' Dees can leverage its brand power and suite of products to compound its growth.

The company's landscaping clients are approximately 50% residential homeowners and 50% commercial businesses, the latter of which includes corporate buildings, hospitals and schools. In total, Dennis' 7 Dees has 54 crews working across the Pacific Northwest, providing services to its customers.

"With well over 300 company employees, we easily provide a range of services for our many different types of customers; that's what makes Dennis' 7 Dees stand out in the landscaping industry," Dirksen said.



Nathan Dirksen, COO of Dennis' 7 Dees (left), is leading the switch to electric equipment for landscaping operations.

Dennis' 7 Dees has 54 crews working across the Pacific Northwest.

Land stewards

Dennis' 7 Dees is committed to sustainable operations and environmental stewardship. Dirksen says this has enabled the company to attract new clientele that prioritize sustainability and green business. The company is intentional about water conservation, recycling organic yard debris and utilizing environmentally responsible lawn services and products.

Some of the company's efforts include but are not limited to using organic, pesticide-free fertilizers, controlling runoff and protecting waterways by installing water gardens or wetlands, as well as choosing chemical-free products to use on plants and flowers that minimize environmental impact.

Dennis' 7 Dees is also making the switch to electric equipment for its landscaping operations. It has invested in a fleet of Gravelly Pro-Turn EVs and Gravelly Pro-Stance EVs. The goal is to improve sustainability by lowering fuel consumption and emissions. The mowers' quiet operations will also reduce noise on jobsites, which can create more pleasing atmospheres for residential and commercial customers, as well as extending working hours.

"We made a huge investment into Gravelly EVs," Dirksen said. "It was not a light decision to switch to electric equipment, but Gravelly was the obvious choice. We now operate five Gravelly 60-inch Pro-Stance EV stand-on mowers and three

48-inch Pro-Turn EVs. They are high-quality and well-developed pieces of equipment that absolutely perform. And they are practical to operate. This investment was undoubtedly the right one."

The electric mowers are working year-round. Crew members are working in a region that has mild and moist climates with generous amounts of rainfall throughout most of the year, besides an occasional dry climate from July to October. During this dry spell, plant irrigation is required. Summers are sunny and cool at a high of 80 degrees Fahrenheit on average, and winters are mild and cloudy with temperatures ranging from 40 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

The region's perennial ryegrass, a thinner blade of grass species, becomes wet and dormant from November to February. However, landscapes still require regular upkeep like cleaning up flower beds or leaves. The grass is thicker in the summer and allows the crew to carry out their full landscaping capabilities. The region's temperate climate, abundance of rain and rich soil allow for plant material to survive year-round, and for Dennis' 7 Dees to maintain an extensive number of different plant types. Except for a rare, week-long snowfall in the winter, work never stops.

A community mainstay

Dirksen says that another secret to Dennis' 7 Dees success is its community outreach program, called "Giving Back." It enables

the company to interact with the communities it operates in and offer its services to groups in need.

"The Growing Grant" is available to non-profits (e.g.: elementary schools) and has Dennis' 7 Dees complete landscaping projects that focus on education or food programs. The grant includes labor, plants and materials to build and maintain outdoor spaces. The "Retail Fundraising Program" provides monetary donations for schools and other nonprofit organizations.

"We've always done something for our community. We have hosted a charity golf tournament to raise funds for the homeless community, volunteered at Habitat for Humanity and donated to underprivileged communities, for example. In recent years, wanted to do something more

intentional, which is why we created our Giving Back program."

With its Giving Back program, Dennis' 7 Dees has truly become a company that fires on all cylinders. Retail, landscaping, commercial, residential, charitable — the company does it all. It has planted deep roots in the communities of the Pacific Northwest and created a powerhouse brand worthy of emulation.

"Dennis 7 Dees' services are multifaceted, and we are fortunate enough to mow a residential customer's lawn one day and handle business with a property management company the next. Every day is different and fast moving, but we have no intent to slow down," Dirksen said. ■

FOUR DECADES STRONG

As Dan Ariens looks back on his 40-year career at AriensCo, he reflects on the changes he's seen with the company and himself.

By Nicholas Ariens

AriensCo is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. Chairman and CEO Dan Ariens is also celebrating two anniversaries — 40 years as an employee, and 25 of them as CEO.

For this issue of *Out Working*, I interviewed my father about this journey. We spoke in a special place, an exhibit at the AriensCo Museum that recreates the garage where Henry Ariens founded the company in 1933.





OW: You have held many roles in your career at AriensCo, how did this prepare you for your current role as CEO?

DA: I believe my diverse work experience, from the assembly line to marketing and sales, has shaped who I am as a leader today. For instance, my time on the assembly line gave me a deep appreciation for the hard work and challenges that come with that kind of job. It's important to understand this kind of day-after-day commitment if you want to effectively lead people. I learned that there are many different leadership styles, but at the core of all of them is the ability to connect with people. As a leader, you need to be humble and empathetic, but also determined and confident. Ultimately, it's about understanding what motivates people and then finding ways to work together to achieve shared goals.

OW: What lessons were passed on to you from the previous AriensCo's generation of leaders and how have those lessons resonated over the past four decades?

DA: My father Mike Ariens was a very empathetic and humble leader. His father, Steve "Mando" Ariens, was a tough and stubborn engineer who was an innovator and inventor. Henry Ariens, who founded AriensCo with his three sons Steve, Leon, and Francis in 1933, deserves a lot of credit. He was in his 60s when he lost his company, Brillion Iron Works, during the Great Depression. Despite this huge setback, he continued to be an entrepreneur. He started AriensCo, and today, we're sitting in a museum exhibition dedicated to the garage where it all began.

When I think about Henry's and Mando's unwavering determination, I am grateful that they didn't have any safety nets to fall back on. They had to rely on their innovation, creativity and determination to succeed, instead of seeking subsidies or help. These are valuable lessons that have inspired me to never give up. They motivate me to keep pushing forward.

OW: How has the company changed since you started working at AriensCo?

DA: We have brands that really matter today. When I started working 40 years ago, we were a tiller manufacturer. We were a rear-engine rider manufacturer. We made garden and yard tractors. We made a snowblower that was really the dominant part of our business — as much as 50% of our total revenue — and that was really risky. We had to make significant changes without letting the snow brand slip.

One of the critical decisions we made was to quit manufacturing tillers, rear-engine riders and tractors, and focus on zero-turn mowers. The zero turn really changed everything. Then we changed our distribution strategy. We went dealer-direct, using the Gravely sales force to take Ariens' business directly to dealers. This was a huge and risky change at the time. By focusing on zero turn and dealer direct, we were able to focus our engineering resources and manufacturing facilities on fewer things and get good at them. This was one of the most important decisions we have made in 40 years.

OW: Was becoming AriensCo's CEO a dream goal for you?

DA: I didn't always think of it as a dream goal, but I had a burning passion for this business from a young age. The building we're currently in used to be our R&D center when I was a kid. I remember trying to persuade my dad

to build me a go-kart when I was around eight or ten years old. I eventually convinced some of the guys to build me one on the side, and we would race it around, powered by a little Tecumseh 5-horsepower engine. This experience was incredibly enjoyable and got me hooked on the idea of working in this industry. My grandfather was also a big influence on me. He was always tinkering around with things, and I loved spending time with him. This business may seem trivial to some people, but we serve a purpose. It holds a special place in my heart.

OW: What are the biggest changes that you've seen over the 25 years you have been CEO?

DA: Throughout my journey as AriensCo's leader, I've realized the importance of having talented individuals around me. Upgrading talent has always been a consistent theme for me, and as a result, our company today is much better and smarter than it was 25 years ago. Over this time, we have also made significant changes to our manufacturing processes, moving towards lean production and getting our employees more engaged in designing their own workstations. We also changed our pay system to a merit-based model, which encouraged employees to learn new skills and grow within the company. We've come a long way since those early days, and we're now in a much better position to face the future. Our dealers also have been a huge part of our story, and they have become much smarter and better over the years.



The Ariens family's legacy has spanned generations since the company was founded in 1933.

OW: How has the landscaping industry evolved over the last few decades?

DA: The landscaping industry didn't really exist when AriensCo bought Gravely. Initially, it was a part-time job for firemen, policemen or teachers. But as houses and yards got bigger and two-income families grew, people no longer had time to cut their own grass. Back in the 1960s and 1970s, you had professional gardeners that turned into lawn care services — less gardening, more yard work. That really took off in the 1980s and it continues to grow today. We have two separate billion-dollar landscaping companies in this industry now! It has now become a professional industry with its own growth curve, and I don't see it slowing down anytime soon.

OW: AriensCo's conservation efforts seem especially close to your heart. Why did you start conservation initiatives at the company's headquarters and where do you see them going?

DA: We had a lot of underutilized property and we wanted to turn it into something meaningful. One of our employees suggested we name something after my father, who was a runner, and we decided to build the Mike Ariens "Run for Life" Trail. We also wanted to dedicate the land to wildlife habitat and build a prairie with wildflowers and pollinators. This led to a Gold Certification from the Wildlife Habitat Council for the work we have done at Stone Prairie and beyond.

It's been thrilling to see a resurgence of wildlife on the grounds, including an endangered species of bumblebee, families of foxes and coyotes, deer and various bird species. We've planted over 20,000 trees and built an oak savanna, an ecosystem also considered endangered. Our employees have been instrumental in the success of this project, and we are expanding it in the near future, building new waterways, planting more trees and cultivating more wildlife. It's a long-term commitment and will continue for generations to come.

OW: What does this all mean for Brillion?

DA: Henry Ariens started a foundry in Brillion, which made him one of the most important founding fathers of the

town. When he lost the foundry, he started AriensCo. The Ariens family grew up in Brillion, and the company grew with the town. AriensCo needs a strong Brillion to thrive, so we're expanding with the Mike Ariens Trail, the Nordic Center, Round Lake Farms, Stone Prairie and other event spaces that bring people into the community. We plan to build apartments, a hotel and other amenities, too. We want to grow the community to 5,000 people and make it run as smartly as our business runs. Housing is our biggest growth challenge and we're working on it.

OW: What legacy do you hope to leave behind?

DA: My dad Mike was a manufacturing guy. He was an engineer who really gave us a great foundation of manufacturing excellence, and we've been able to take it further. I want to leave behind a legacy of exceptional branding. To improve our brand, we need to be more confident in our products and tell our customers how great they are. We've taken the Ariens snow thrower, and the Gravely and Ariens mowers to new heights, and I want to continue to build these brands.

OW: Do you have any favorite memories of the 40 years?

DA: Yes, I have a lot of them. Some of my fondest memories are of dealer summits and being with our customers. Those are learning weekends for our dealers, but they are also a big celebration. We have a lot of fun with our friends, colleagues and our customers. I have been a member of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) board for over 40 years, and during this time, I have many cherished memories of contributing to changes in the industry for the better. One of my proudest achievements was merging two trade shows into one, which resulted in the show becoming one of the top eight in the country. I believe that this has helped to fund the industry's efforts to develop regulatory and safety standards.

Apart from those, I have numerous great memories of attending trade shows and dealer summits with my family and kids. These experiences span over 60 years, from my childhood, accompanying my father and grandfather on their business trips, to my children joining me at trade shows. It has been a tremendous journey. ■





SPANISH CONQUEST

A new distributor in the Iberian Peninsula is promoting the growth of Ariens in Spain and Portugal, expounding the benefits of electric zero-turn mowers for the region.

By Julia Shrader

A pattern will surely emerge if you examine enough companies that sell and support Ariens outdoor power equipment. Family-owned and -operated businesses are often fueling and supporting the brand's global growth. These companies provide hands-on experiences for Ariens customers that put a premium on supporting long-term business relationships.

Such is the case with Yaros, a new Ariens distributor in the Iberian Peninsula. Eduard Rodríguez started the company just over a decade ago, and with his family on board, Yaros has already become one of Spain and Portugal's largest outdoor power equipment distributors. The Besalú-based company supports 23 equipment dealers in the region and has aggressive plans to add nearly 25 more in the future.

Yaros forged a deal with AriensCo in 2020 to bring Ariens equipment to Spain and Portugal. During these last three years, Yaros has been working hard to promote the full range of Ariens Lawn and Snow products, including both residential and commercial models, to dealers across the region. This effort is boosting the visibility of Ariens in Europe and helping to fuel the expansion of zero-turn lawn mowers across the continent.

"Yaros is entering a new chapter, together with help and support from both my family and Ariens," Rodríguez said. "Partnering with a largely known and credible equipment manufacturer is a great place to kick off this new era. Ariens is the largest company that we do business with, and we plan to continue expanding the acclaimed brand name across all of Spain and Portugal."

In addition to its distribution efforts, Yaros is building a large warehouse that will serve as the Ariens Academy in Spain, where dealers will learn about Ariens equipment and participate in hands-on training. The warehouse will also include service facilities, a large parts inventory and demonstration grounds for dealers to test drive mowers.

"The partnership with AriensCo has reflected a huge investment for Yaros," said Massimo Caner, international sales manager at AriensCo. "The Rodríguez family

has shown tremendous excitement for working with AriensCo, and Yaros is expanding both its staff and facilities to further support the growth of Ariens in the region. AriensCo will be there to collaborate and support the company throughout this endeavor."

A shifting landscape

Eduard Rodríguez founded Yaros in 2011, after years of working in the lawn and garden industry. He started at age 19 in 1986 and gained valuable experience working in various roles, including leading a lawn and garden division at an industrial company. This prepared him to launch Yaros, where he operates as CEO. His son, Gerard Rodríguez Grau, leads the company's Ariens division. Eduard's daughter, Berta Rodríguez Grau, also works at the company part-time.

Yaros' headquarters in Besalú is in northeastern Catalonia, Spain, which provides great access to the rest of the Iberian Peninsula. With 19 employees, the company distributes gardening and agricultural machinery, and represents thousands of global brands. Gerard has traveled throughout the region to visit dealers and promote Ariens equipment, highlighting its global reputation for durable, well-designed products.

"We pride ourselves on delivering quality service, and we guarantee the fast delivery of equipment and parts in Spain and Portugal," Grau said. "Because we have such close proximity to the AriensCo facility in the U.K., our machine deliveries and response times are expedited, and our dealers are better connected."

Grau says that Yaros is seeing rapid change in its European market. A generational shift is occurring at equipment dealers and lawn care companies across Spain. Owners in their late 50s and 60s are preparing to retire, and children in their early 20s and 30s are preparing to take over. This creates an opportunity to embrace new technologies and explore other innovations, which is reflected in a growing interest for both zero-turns lawn mowers and electric equipment.

"Ariens is the largest company that we handle business with, and we plan to continue expanding the acclaimed brand name across all of Spain and Portugal."

— EDUARD RODRIGUEZ, CEO OF YAROS



CEO of Yaros, Eduard Rodríguez, with his son and co-worker, Gerard Rodríguez Grau.



“Europe is not just one country — it’s a group of different cultures, languages and lifestyles. Yaros can deliver native communication strategies, as well as an alternate understanding of the local market and its structure.”

— MASSIMO CANER, INTERNATIONAL SALES MANAGER AT ARIENSCO

“As soon as people test drive a zero-turn mower, they’re sold. They realize they’re quicker than the average tractor, they help to complete more jobs in less time and they are more cost-efficient,” he explained. “This has tremendous appeal to government municipalities, too. They are thinking about the future, which is zero-turns.”

Yaros has placed particular emphasis on these municipalities, believing they will remain at the forefront in acquiring new lawn and garden power equipment, due to both their efficiency needs and emissions reduction strategies. The company is collaborating with its dealer partners to arrange meetings with government officials and educate them on new products. These meetings sometimes include local landscaping companies that work with the municipality.

Yaros uses these opportunities to promote Ariens zero-turns, including those that are battery-powered.

“We highlight Ariens ZENITH E electric zero-turn mowers because of their flexibility and swappable batteries. Landscapers can simply exchange batteries as opposed to charging them overnight,” Grau said. “This is the only electric mower that allows landscapers to work all day without fail. It will enable municipalities to become more efficient and reduce their emissions.”

Caner said landscaping companies are realizing the potential that zero-turns hold, too.

“Landscapers must understand that there’s an alternative way to work besides the traditional cutting and collecting of the grass with a tractor. With a zero-turn, you can simply cut then leave the grass on the ground,” he said. “The zero-turn mower is the fastest way to do it. They are quick to maneuver and operate faster.”

A European touch

Caner says that the ability to deliver American-engineered products with a European touch is a unique differentiator for Yaros. The products reflect AriensCo’s rich heritage and quality, and dealers can work with a distributor that understands the unique needs of customers in the region.

“Yaros and its dealer partners benefit from a more European approach to doing business,” he explained. “That’s not to say it’s a better approach, just different. Europe is not just one country — it’s a group of different cultures, languages and lifestyles. Yaros can deliver native communication strategies, as well as an alternate understanding of the local market and its structure.”

Yaros focuses on a human-centric company philosophy that prioritizes relationships, and it’s reflected in its business processes. Yaros has a welcoming “terrazza,” an outdoor rooftop, that customers can visit and spend time with the distributor, and the company is eager to visit dealers on their own turf.

“We emphasize personal visits to our dealers to fully understand their business, region, challenges and goals,” Grau said. “Our dedication to satisfying customers’ needs is the same as AriensCo’s. The philosophy is win-win — the customer needs to make money, of course, but we want them to enjoy working with Yaros and AriensCo.”

By maintaining its current customer-service excellence, Yaros foresees continued success and a growing brand awareness for both companies across its product market.

“Our investment in AriensCo has been nothing short of rewarding in the brief time we’ve worked together. We foresee a bright future ahead,” Rodríguez concluded. ■

Horse-Drawn to Horse-Powered

Jean Guy Gagnon reflects on 67 years of Gravely ownership.



Jean Guy Gagnon enjoys performing regular maintenance on his Gravely ZT XL zero-turn lawn mower.

Mr. Gagnon just purchased his first zero-turn lawn mower at the age of 91. He has a long history with Gravely through the decades and shared his recollections with *Out Working*.



I'm 91 years old and from Madeleine-Centre, which is on the North Gaspé Coast in Québec, Canada.

There were no lawn mowers like we have today. When I was young, everything was powered by a horse. There were no gasoline engines in the agricultural machinery industry at the time.

In 1956 my dad and mom went to Montréal for a medical examination because my dad needed to see a specialist. At the same time, they heard there was a four-foot snowstorm around the Gaspé Coast. So, before my parents came back home, they went to purchase my dad his first Gravely snow blower at a dealer located in Ville Saint Laurent, Montréal.

I bought my first Gravely 812 lawn tractor in 1973 because, at the time, Gravely was one of the first brands on the market that offered a tractor equipped with a three-blade mower underneath and a front-drive snowblower.

The first time I mowed with a tractor I was in a hay field with about three-foot-high alfalfa. I began mowing through that with my Gravely when I realized its strength and reliability. The tractor never slowed down, even if it seemed like there was too much hay to mow. I've been satisfied with Gravely ever since I discovered how they build really tough products.

You can't find much better than Gravely mowers. They're reliable and strong, and it's easy to find parts and service. They're tough and heavy-duty.

We still have the Gravely 812 tractor. I handed that down to Roberto, my son. He still uses it to mow the land on his own property, while I mow with my new Gravely ZT XL zero-turn lawn mower (pictured above).

As I'm getting older, it's becoming more difficult to turn the steering wheel on the Gravely 812 compared to the zero-turn. With the zero-turn, you only have to move the handles one way or another. It's easier to turn than a garden tractor wheel because

of its driving movement and speed. The zero-turn driving levers are also quite soft on my hands.

I think about my dad who purchased the first Gravely for our family. It's an honor to continue working with the same brand and type of machine.

I've always wanted to prove that I'm able to use heavy-duty equipment on my own and show people that a dream can come true, even at my age. For many years, I've wanted to acquire my own ZT XL and prove to everyone that I can still do it.

The secret is proper maintenance of the machine. I've been lucky because I have a son who is a mechanic. We've always kept a close eye on our machines to ensure everything is running as it should be. If it wasn't, we'd quickly repair it.

Now with the internet, operation and maintenance are easier because I can go on the Gravely website and conduct my own research on equipment. I can easily talk to other Gravely owners living in America, whenever I need. ■



AriensCo launched a new aftermarket parts business that aims to streamline the process for dealers and landscapers.



The landscaping industry is built on relationships. Landscaping companies that trust their local dealer are better able to make quick decisions for the parts and servicing of their equipment fleets, knowing that their dealer will provide them with the guidance and support they need to help them grow.

AriensCo launched Henry's Parts and Equipment (Henry's), a new aftermarket parts brand that enables trusted AriensCo dealers to provide parts options to their customers that use multiple equipment brands. Henry's

delivers high-quality parts that fit a wide variety of makes and models, including the most wearable parts that landscapers most often need to replace (see sidebar).

Henry's serves dealers through a direct-to-dealer model, and all current Ariens and Gravelly dealers are automatically eligible to stock Henry's parts. Since September, dealers have been able to place orders for Henry's parts and expect 48-hour delivery times from a central warehouse, free freight for orders over \$150, one-year parts warranties and same-day shipping.

“Henry's isn't just another place to buy a part — it's about providing a marketplace for our community of dealers and landscapers.”

— STEPHEN ARIENS, VICE PRESIDENT OF HENRY'S PARTS AND EQUIPMENT



Founder Henry Ariens with tiller, circa 1939.

“We launched Henry’s to create a one-stop-shop for all of our dealers’ and landscaping customers’ parts needs,” said Stephen Ariens, vice president of Henry’s. “By providing a service that can supply parts for nearly any brand of outdoor power equipment, we can help landscapers become more efficient. They can work with their trusted dealer for all their parts and service needs, which streamlines the number of transactions and suppliers they must manage. More importantly, they can work with a single dealer-supplier that they know and trust.”

The name “Henry’s Parts and Equipment” was inspired by AriensCo Founder Henry Ariens. He helped start the company in 1933, along with other members of the Ariens family. His emphasis on innovation and strong customer service, delivered through trusted business relationships, continues to this day, underpinning the launch of this new aftermarket parts service.

As the outdoor power equipment industry contends with private equity buyouts, corporate mergers and acquisitions, outsourcing and rebranding, for example, Henry’s seeks to maintain a sense of community. Landscapers work with their trusted dealers, and dealers work with their trusted AriensCo partners.

“Henry’s isn’t just another place to buy a part — it’s about providing a marketplace for our community of dealers and landscapers,” Ariens said. “They can trust in the fact that they are buying high-quality parts from a company that wants to support them over the long term and help them grow their own business. Our goal is to provide a service that makes parts-buying easier and more efficient, and gives dealers and landscapers more peace of mind. From customer service to sales, we pride ourselves on our ability to build and maintain relationships and create a familial atmosphere that makes it easy to do business.”

“Our goal is to provide a service that makes part-buying easier and more efficient.”

— STEPHEN ARIENS, VICE PRESIDENT OF HENRY’S



What’s on sale?

Henry’s Parts and Service stocks the most “wearable” parts for a variety of brands and types of outdoor power equipment, as well as tools and other accessories. This includes:

- Belts and blades
- Spark plugs and engine components
- Clutches and carburetors
- Tires and wheels
- Lubricants, oils and fuel lines
- String trimmer line
- Pull-line rope
- Industry-specific tools and electronics

NO LIMITS

The Ariens APEX Limited Edition zero-turn celebrates 90 years of engineering excellence.



Ariens has a rich history of delivering cutting-edge outdoor power equipment designs — 90 years, to be exact.

To celebrate reaching such a momentous milestone, the Ariens team has created the APEX Limited Edition zero-turn lawn mower. This limited run is only available at Ariens dealers and is a once-in-a-lifetime offer.

You'll find no similarities to the ghosts of lawn mowers in the APEX Limited Edition. The goal was to create a mower that represents the full force of nearly a century's experience in cutting-edge engineering. Its strikingly modern design is a combination of distinct styling and premium features.

"We wanted to design a machine to honor our past, etch our present and chart our future," said Andy Massignan, product director for residential lawn at AriensCo. "The vision and execution of this machine is unique. Every single detail mattered to the point of obsession. The result is a one-of-a-kind mower ready to impress the next generations of property owners."

The APEX Limited Edition's bold design is immediately impressive, with a paint scheme and graphics not seen on previous Ariens designs. Most Ariens lawn mowers are decked out in a traditional and instantly

recognizable orange color — that trademark orange is still represented in this edition; however, it appears as an accent to a predominantly white and black color scheme. It's a paint job that quickly catches the eye and tells the world you're serious about your lawn.

Premium graphics also set this mower apart from the crowd. An Ariens 90th anniversary badge seals the mower firmly in 2023. Perhaps its most striking feature is the engineering drawings sprawled across the mower's front-facing decals in the form of intricate, reflective line work.

"The engineering graphics give a sneak peek of what happens behind the scenes. It represents the people who create the products and the blueprint that leads to creating the real thing," said Julia Degregory, an industrial designer at AriensCo.

These drawings also spread across a limited-edition seat that features a wide base, high-back cushions and armrests for extra comfort and a secure ride. The seat is isolated — a set of vibration-absorbing dampers work to smooth out bumpy rides and engine pulsations, for a more comfortable mowing experience.

Aggressive rear tires accentuate the APEX Limited Edition's modern design, with deep treads to keep mowers moving confidently on all surfaces. A USB port delivers power

for phones or other accessories, which can be stowed in the mower's secure storage area.

A rubber floor mat — only available in this edition — lends a premium feel, with more secure footing, vibration dampening and cushioning comfort. Custom molded and branded handgrips are focused on operator comfort, with ergonomics considered down to the last dimple.

The APEX Limited Edition features the Ariens ENVY elite cutting system, which utilizes a commercial-style deck, and is 5 1/2" deep to optimize airflow and quality of cut. It's constructed from 10-gauge steel for durability. Combined with a powerful Kawasaki engine that represents the best in its class, riders can rest assured that this limited-edition zero-turn mower can handle any job that is thrown at it.

"At its core, the APEX Limited Edition is a machine for everyone for everyday use, capable of handling the punishment from a large property. Taken a bit further, an owner who meticulously cares for their equipment like a member of their own family will get the most out of this machine. It's for someone who is as obsessed as we are about the details," Massignan said. "We're producing a limited quantity for a limited amount of time. Buy yours while you still can!"

33 Objects

By Ann Stilp

2023 marks AriensCo's 90th anniversary. To celebrate the milestone, the AriensCo Museum dug into its archives and chose "33 Objects" that reflect the company's rich history. Often, these artifacts show that it's not just manufacturing history that AriensCo has played an important role in, but also the forging of America itself.



Re-tooling after the war

During World War II, the raw materials needed to produce Ariens equipment, such as steel, were strictly designated for military purposes. When the war was over, Ariens was able to ramp back up and double production. These hand-carved scale models of manufacturing equipment were likely used to determine the most efficient plant layout.



Zero-turning point

In 1994, Gravely introduced a zero-turn lawn mower for landscapers that was equipped with a newly invented hydrostatic transmission that utilized pumps and wheel motors. This invention would forever change the company's lawn mower designs, and it was engineered into future Gravely lawn mowers for decades to come.

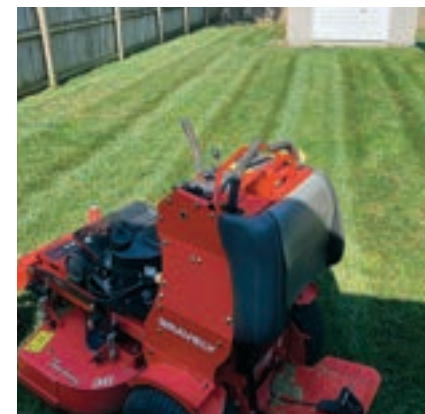


Collect them all

Unique advertising methods, such as producing trinkets and mementos, have helped promote AriensCo products since the golden age of advertising. The oldest item in the company's collection is a matchbook from the early 1940s that features Ariens tillers, a once-popular farming machine. These matchbooks were likely gifted to farmers across the country when Mando Ariens demoed equipment for them.

BEST-IN-CLASS PHOTOS

Looking back on the stripes of summer — check out some of the best shots of our lawn mowers getting to work across the U.S. and Europe this past summer.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
 AS-Motor (Bühlertann, Germany) @asmotorworldwide; Sutherland's Lawn Care (Pickerington, Ohio) @sutherlandslawncare; CL Lawn Care (Lowell, Indiana) @clawncare; Alpine Lawn Services (Joplin, Missouri) @alpinelawnservices; Lawn & Order (Massachusetts) @lawnandorderofmass; Seward Services (New Smyrna Beach, Florida) @sewardoutdoorservices; Craig Kavajecz (Wisconsin) @kavajecz_hunts; FISCO Farm & Garden Machinery (West Yorkshire, England) @fisco_fgm



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