



THE LANDSCAPER CENSUS

A SUPPLEMENT TO

Lawn & Landscape

SPONSORED BY



WHO ARE WE?

THE LANDSCAPE INDUSTRY is made up of people with incredible drive and work ethic, which is why Exmark is proud to be a part of the second Lawn & Landscape Landscaper Census. It's inspiring to learn more about the incredible variety of people and backgrounds that make our industry special.

The Landscaper Census shows us that there are many pathways to success in the landscape industry. The Census findings will help you learn more about your colleagues, their backgrounds and the challenges they face in their businesses. This offers perspective on your business successes and challenges, and helps you understand how you're doing relative to your peers.

That knowledge is power for you.

At Exmark, our goal is to make you more profitable in your landscape business. We're doing this by building innovative, easy to use mowers and lawn care equipment that deliver increased productivity, durability and efficiency. Our industry-leading dealer network is ready to provide service, parts and support you can trust to keep your machines up and running strong, all season long.

For nearly 40 years, Exmark has worked hard to consistently exceed customer expectations, and we value the relationships we've built with each of our customers over the years. If you are not currently an Exmark customer, I personally invite you to visit your local Exmark dealer and learn more about how our equipment can help you raise the bar in your business.

Wishing you all the best in the 2020 season and beyond!

Best regards,



Jamie Briggs
Exmark Director of Marketing



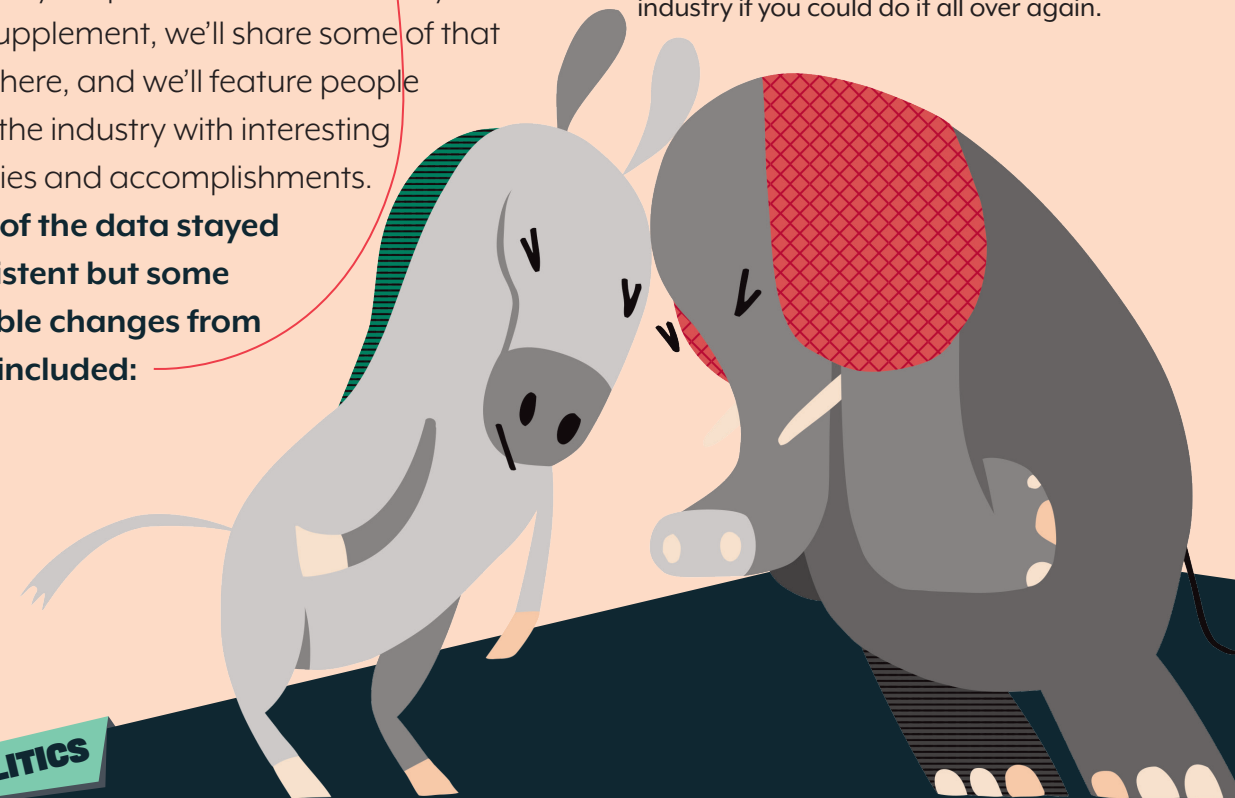
Jamie Briggs
Exmark Director of Marketing

IN 2015, we set out to discover what the average landscaper and lawn care operator are like outside of work through our first-ever Landscaper Census. Well, here we are five years later, gathering that same information to figure out how you've changed, along with some new questions to gain some different knowledge. The survey was long (63 questions) but more than 200 readers completed it.

Sure, some of the questions pertain to work, but the bulk of the questions center around your personal life and history. In this supplement, we'll share some of that data here, and we'll feature people from the industry with interesting hobbies and accomplishments.

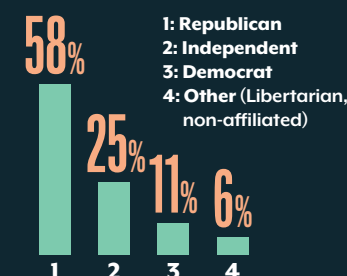
A lot of the data stayed consistent but some notable changes from 2015 included:

- **6% more of you don't work on weekends (Way to go!)** – 26% today vs 20% in 2015.
- **4% more of you vote and have communicated with an elected official** on behalf of the green industry.
- Less of you are democrats (**11%**) now versus 2015 (**17%**), while the numbers show those people moved to Independent and our "other" option.
- Your kids don't work in the industry as much as in 2015. That number shrank from **27% to 19%**.
- More of you are married and co-own the business with your spouse – **7% more** said "I do" in this report and **6% more** are partners inside and outside the company.
- **2% more of you** would enter the industry if you could do it all over again.

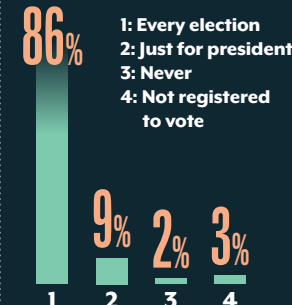


POLITICS

What is your political affiliation?

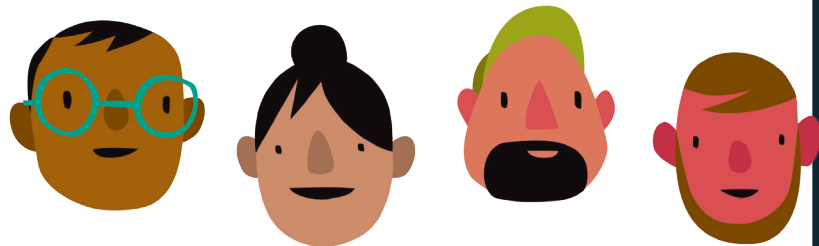


How often do you vote?



Have you ever lobbied or talked to an elected official - written a letter, made phone calls or personal visits, for example - on behalf of the green industry?





You are ...

18-24 years 25-34 years 35-44 years

2%

10%

21%

45-54 years

25%

55-64 years

30%

65+ years

12%

American Indian

1%

Asian

1%

African American

2%

Caucasian

86%

Hispanic/Latino

3%

Prefer not to answer

7%

93% male

7% female

What was your approximate revenue in 2019?

33% Less than \$200,000

18% \$200,000-\$499,999

13% \$500,000-\$1,000,000

36% \$1,000,000 or more

What was your take-home pay from your landscape business in 2019?

19% Less than \$30,000

18% \$30,000-\$49,999

31% \$50,000-\$99,999

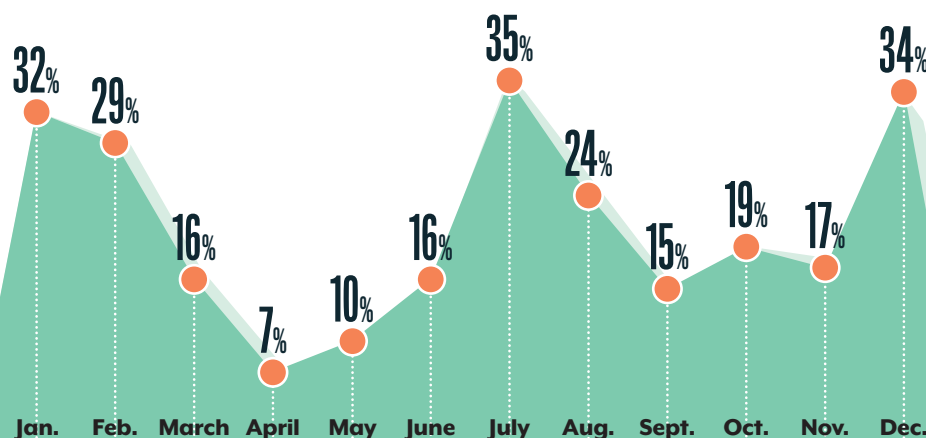
17% \$100,000-\$149,999

2% \$150,000-\$199,999

13% \$200,000 or more

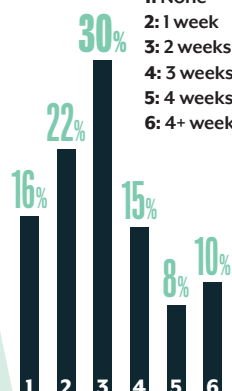
When do you typically take a vacation?

Choose all months that apply



How much vacation did you take in 2019?

1: None
2: 1 week
3: 2 weeks
4: 3 weeks
5: 4 weeks
6: 4+ weeks



Which sports did you play in high school or college?

Football

49%

Baseball

30%

Basketball

27%

Track & Field

24%

Wrestling

13%

Soccer

12%

Golf

11%

Hockey

10%

Swimming

8%

Softball

5%

Lacrosse

3%



Did you play sports in high school or college?

Yes 70% No 30%

If you have a degree, is it in a horticulture-related field?

Yes

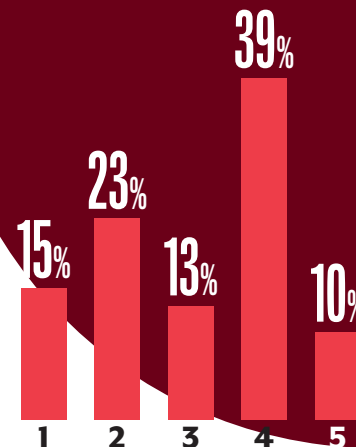
27%

No

73%

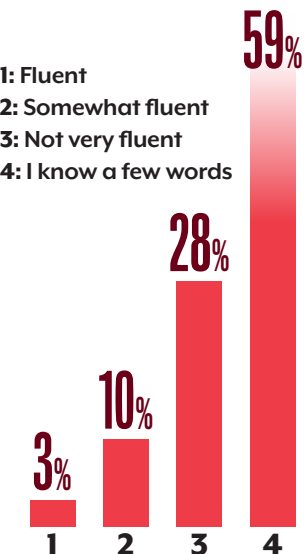
What is the highest level of education you attained?

1: High school or equivalent
2: Some college
3: 2-year college degree
4: 4-year college degree
5: Master's degree

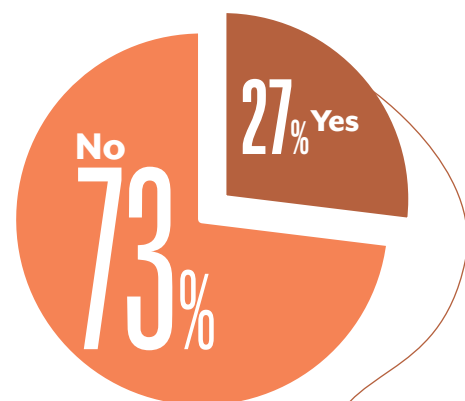


How well do you speak Spanish?

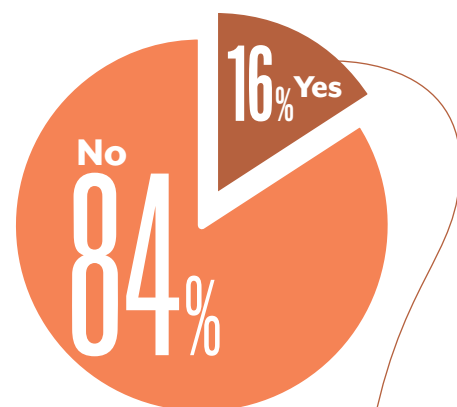
1: Fluent
2: Somewhat fluent
3: Not very fluent
4: I know a few words



Do your children work in the green industry?



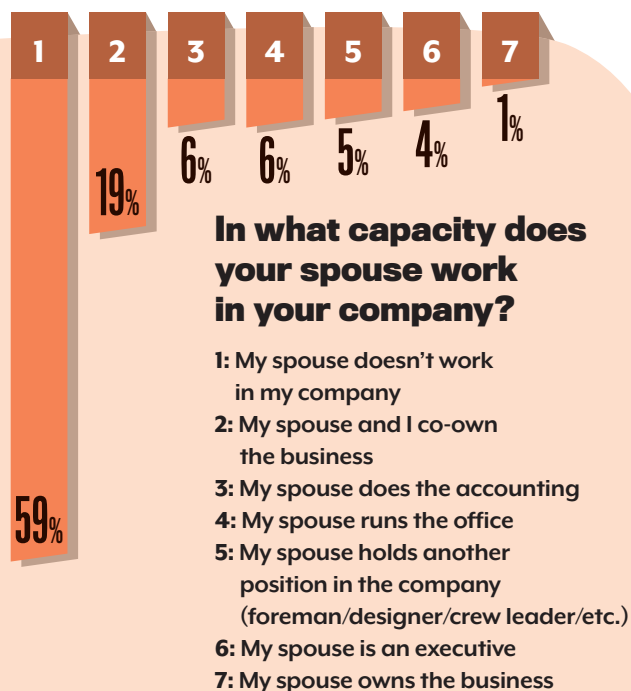
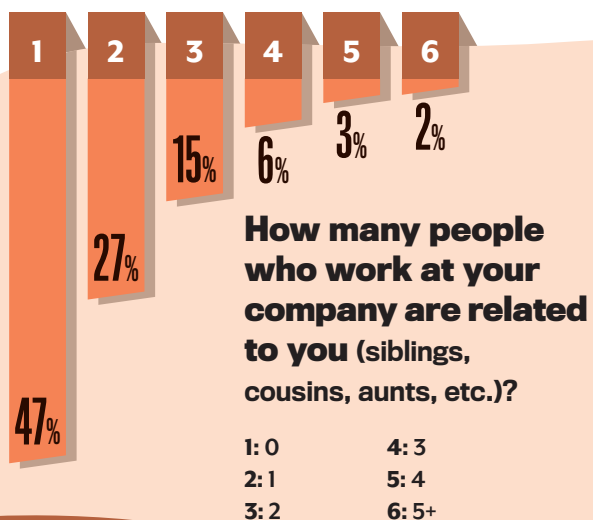
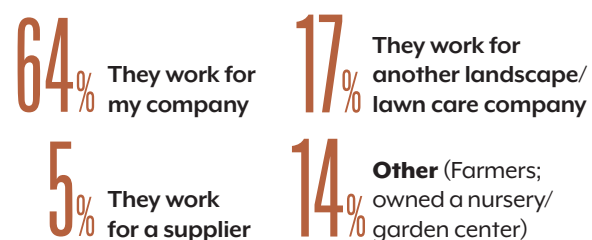
Did your parents work in the green industry - or do they currently?



If they do, where do they work?



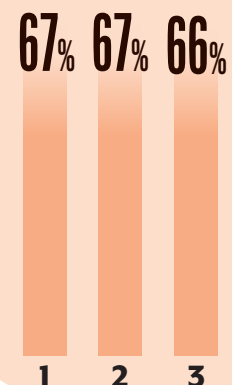
Where do/did they work?



What pets do you have?

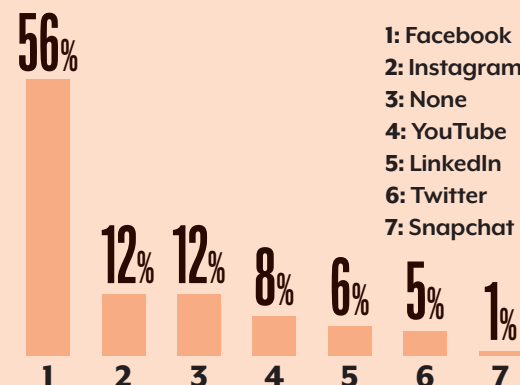


What TV services do you subscribe to?



- 1: Cable
- 2: Netflix
- 3: Amazon Prime
- 4: Disney+
- 5: Hulu
- 6: YouTube TV
- 7: Apple TV
- 8: AT&T Now
- 9: Sling TV

Which is your go-to social media platform?



- 1: Facebook
- 2: Instagram
- 3: None
- 4: YouTube
- 5: LinkedIn
- 6: Twitter
- 7: Snapchat

65%
Rock

56%
Country

33%
Pop/Top 40

21%
Classical

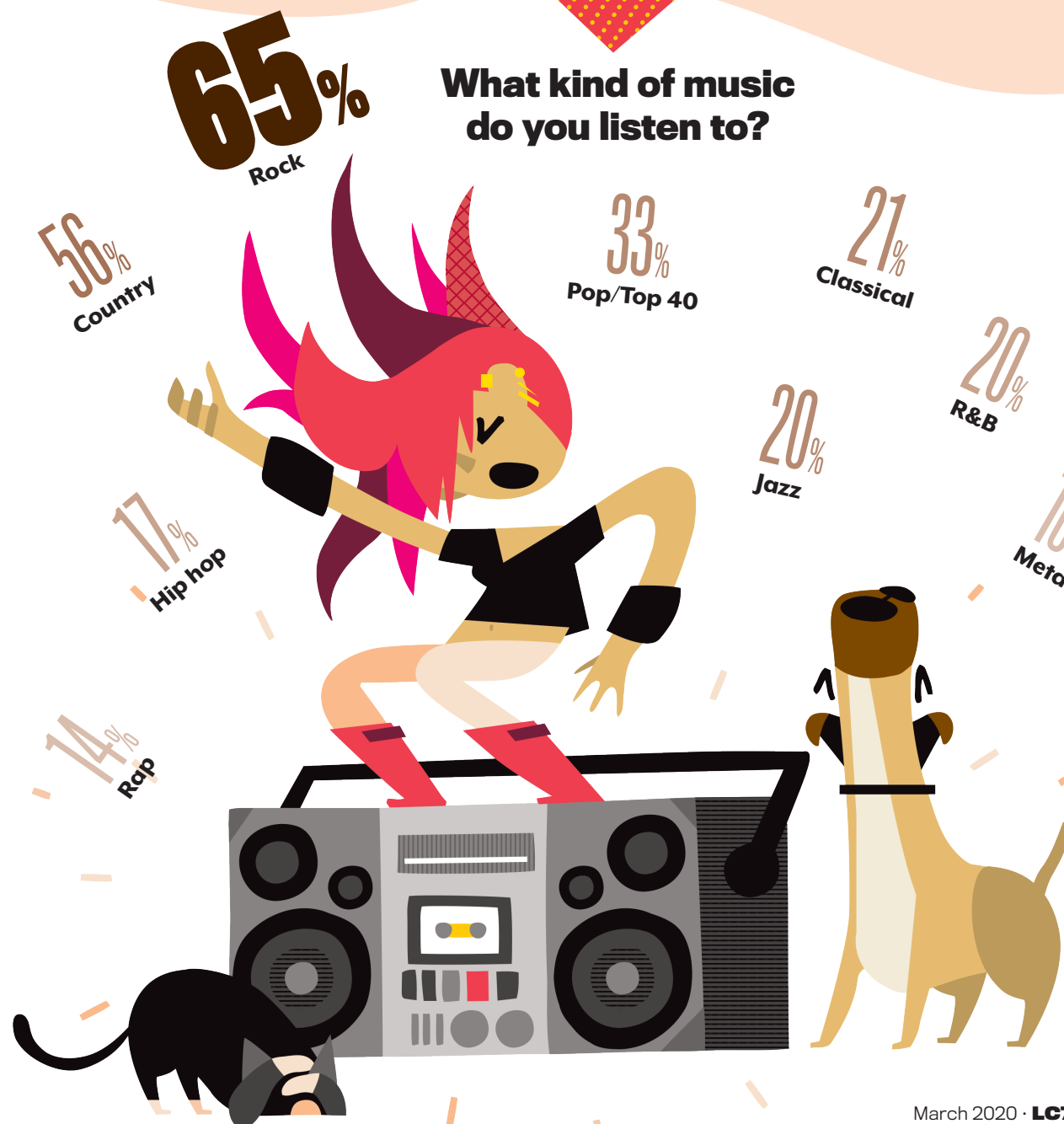
20%
R&B

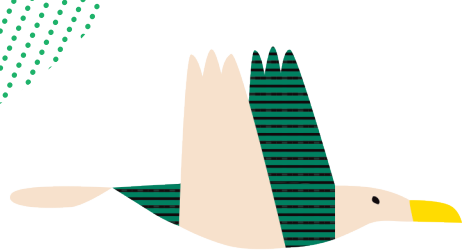
20%
Jazz

16%
Metal

17%
Hip hop

14%
Rap





Behind the mask

Tiffany McCall, owner,
Rana Landscaping and Design

WHETHER IT WAS a light-up robot with voice-changing capabilities or a convincingly real Lego Indiana Jones, Tiffany McCall pulled out all the stops for her child's trick-or-treat experience.

The costumes she and her boyfriend designed were always unique. As a long-time landscaper (and now the owner of Rana Landscaping and Design), McCall says she had plenty of time once her season ended to put her effort into the projects.

"I like having something to do and having an end product, which is why I'm a landscaper," McCall says. "So, when my season ended, I had time just right around Halloween to put all my energy into building costumes."

The costumes were never simply purchased at a store. For example, one year her son went as a robot, but McCall wrapped his arms and legs in aluminum dryer vents, and the mouth on the helmet lit up with LED lights as he talked through a voice-changer. The next year, she hand-crafted a Lego Indiana Jones costume. "Again, I put my son in a cardboard box," McCall jokes. "There was a period of time he kept spending Halloween in boxes." For photos and videos of some of McCall's costumes, visit bit.ly/LandscaperCensus.

Facing the music

Nate Fetig, co-owner,
Alpine Gardens

IN 2019, Nate Fetig spent over 60 days (spread throughout the year) attending concerts. When he's not sitting in the crowd for one of his favorite bands, he co-owns Alpine Gardens, the landscaping company his parents started in 1978.

After his first concert – The Beach Boys (with John Stamos on drums) at the Greeley Stampede – he was hooked. Now, he's always got a running list of concerts he'd like to attend. "There are lots of artists that I haven't seen yet that I'd like to, and that list is always in flux – as I check artists off the list, more get added," Fetig says. Distance hasn't stopped him, either. "My wife and I have gone to a bluegrass festival in Mexico for the past three years and I've driven as far as five hours for a concert," he says.

He's seen over 60 shows just in 2019, but some of his most memorable shows include BB King, Al Green & Etta James at Red Rocks Amphitheater, Buena Vista Social Club at the Denver Botanic Gardens; Strings & Sol Festival in Puerto Morelos Mexico and The Allman Brothers at Red Rocks Amphitheater.

"It certainly can be difficult at times to manage the work/life balance, but we just schedule in things that we like to do (such as concerts) and we make sure we do those things that we schedule in," he says. "A lot of times that may mean that we're going to have to put in longer hours before or after social events to catch up, but those are the things that help keep our sanity."



Pinball wizard

Tim Christie, owner, Great Oak Landscape Group

WHAT STARTED OUT with a new house and some space to fill 15 years ago turned into a hobby that introduced Tim Christie to a whole new world. After Christie, the owner of Great Oak Landscape Group near Atlanta, and his wife, Lee, who serves as a vice president at the company, moved into their newly constructed home, he thought about putting a pool table in the basement.

His wife also mentioned how much fun pinball was and that sparked Tim's fond memories playing pinball as a kid. So, he bought two pinball machines – space shuttle and F-14 Tomcat, which he still owns – that needed some work.

He knew nothing about how to restore them, but wanted to learn, and through the Internet he discovered pinball enthusiasts who were willing to give advice.

Years ago, Christie could buy them for a few hundred dollars, but now they cost more than \$2,000, and that's for broken machines. To date, he's restored about 40 – six of them he's kept and the others he's sold. He says simple fixes can take a day, but a more elaborate restoration took him a year.

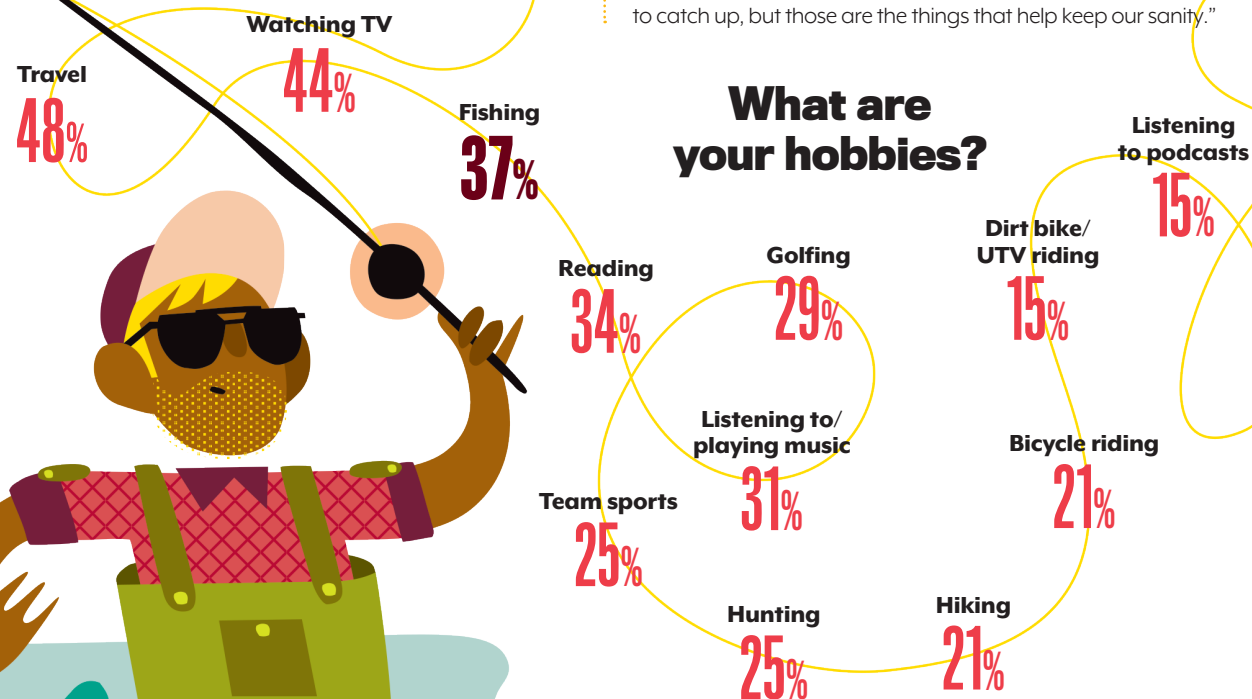
"I bought one called 'A Creature from the Black Lagoon,' which is a very popular title and I bought it in boxes," he says. "I mean literally all the parts were in four or five boxes and I had to find a new cabinet and I then slowly just got it all put back together little by little."

Christie says restoring the machines takes his mind off work, and he enjoys bringing these games back to life for someone to enjoy.

Oh, and about that pool table?

"I never got a pool table," he says with a laugh, "because I got sucked into this."

What are your hobbies?



Frozen over

Dave White, owner,
Glacier View Landscape & Design

DAVE WHITE'S COMPANY, Glacier View Landscape & Design, isn't just named for the cold Colorado winters.

It's actually a nod to a previous career path that led White to the South Pole, where he drilled ice cores in Antarctica as a research assistant with the University of Colorado's Siple Dome project. The trip happened in 1996, but White hasn't soon forgotten his eight weeks in a frozen land where the sun shined 24/7.

On this project, he drilled preliminary ice cores before others took larger, more exact samples. "It was a multi-year, multi-million dollar project that I was just a small little cog in the wheel of, so to speak," he says. White was able to go on the trip because he had been studying the relationship between volcanic activity and climate as evidenced by ice cores as a research project of his own.

While there, White says they lived in Quonset huts and had two-minute showers each, using melted snow as water. He didn't run into penguins or polar bears – they were located inland surrounded by much of nothing. He recalls one solo trip he took by himself on a snow machine that brought him to a spot where he could look 360 degrees and see nothing but ice and not a cloud above him.

"It was almost a spiritual experience at that point," he says.

▶ There's more to these stories, from these highlighted hobbies and others: bit.ly/LandscaperCensus



Head in the game

Katie Felts-Martin, owner,
Clean Air Lawn Care

BEFORE SIGNING ON to own and operate a Clean Air Lawn Care franchise with her husband in St. Louis, Katie Felts-Martin spent two decades as a sports broadcaster for several media outlets in states like Alabama, Arkansas, North Carolina and Missouri.

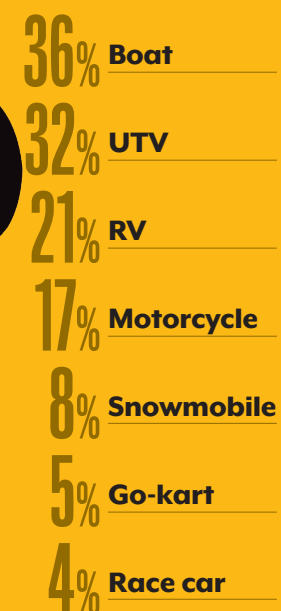
She reported on three World Series runs in St. Louis, with two ending up in celebration, and had a chance to cover NASCAR, college sports and minor league teams during her time in Greensboro, North Carolina. But for Felts-Martin, the highlight of her career wasn't on a court or field; it was in the White House.

In 2012, Felts-Martin received an invitation in the mail from the White House, letting her know she'd be invited to interview First Lady Michelle Obama, right around the time of her Let's Move! Initiative.

"You're given 24 hours to RSVP so you scurry a little bit, but once you RSVP you have several weeks to prepare for that travel and everything," she says. Felts-Martin and three other sports reporters were given five-minute time slots for their one-on-one interviews. Staffers set the shots for each reporter before they come in for the interview, and then the countdown is on.

"When you think about five minutes, it goes really quick," she says. "When they tell you to go...you go. You get to rattle off the questions that you have for her and it really just flies by."

What "fun" equipment do you own?



If you had to do it all over again, would you still go into the landscape industry?

YES 87%

Why?

- ▶ Most of the time, our projects are very rewarding. I love to create a project and see the smiling faces on the final walkthrough.
- ▶ I wouldn't say I'm overly passionate about lawn care per se, but I like the business I've built. I like the people who are on this team, I like the financial lifestyle it's allowed me, and I like the freedom of my time and lifestyle it's allowed me. I like that I have control over my destiny in those regards. I don't know what other career path I would have found myself in that would have allowed me all those things. The low barrier to entry to this industry can be difficult to compete against, (but) that same low barrier to entry is what allowed me to get my feet wet and stumble into this business when I was in high school and college.
- ▶ I get to be outside every day. I am my own boss and I enjoy making my own hours.
- ▶ Yes. Because of the route we chose in sustainable landscapes, I feel this was a healthy lifestyle choice. I have also created many enduring relationships and friends through my work. I get to do interesting things every day that help people and the planet!
- ▶ I like to see something ugly turned into something beautiful. I love it when the homeowner has that smile like they just received a Christmas present.

NO 13%

Why not?

- ▶ I have often asked myself this question and this is such a hard one to answer. My current business is my everything and it's all I know. I think given the labor factor or lack thereof for that matter, I may be inclined to explore alternative options given the opportunity to "start fresh." With that being said, I feel so incredibly blessed to have built the business I direct today, and I would not be the person I am today without it. I started my company in high school and it's all I have ever done or know. It's where I will be until the day I sell.
- ▶ I enjoy the industry and have a talent for it but would have chosen to be military or law enforcement instead. The green industry is constantly changing and also needs constant attention whereas a steady career has more appeal.
- ▶ Too many unprofessional low-ball competitors. Labor pool is terrible.
- ▶ Don't earn as much as I did in corporate world, and don't have the time off that I had before.
- ▶ The industry has changed so much the (last) couple of years there are so many one-man company's now that don't have insurance or licenses or pay taxes. It makes it hard to compete.



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