

Book Review Editor: Theodore J. Weidner, Ph.D., P.E., AIA

**This is a time of change** — changes to deal with restricted or shrinking budgets, staffing changes, looking for efficiencies, and trying to become a better organization. The facility officer is called upon to do more than just keep things working. The first book addresses how to leverage teams to work effectively. The second book looks on the technical side to measure building efficiency and responsiveness to user needs. Right now, I'm up to my eyebrows in work that demands the help of both of these books. You may find similar reasons to use them.

#### IT'S ONLY THE JANITOR

Roderick B. Park, Rockpile Press, Geyserville, CA, 2009, 207 pages, hardcover, \$29.95.

Every now and then a chief facility officer should get the perspective of the academic community in which he or she serves. That's the reason to read *It's Only the Janitor*. I'll confess, the title caught me and I was fully expecting to read something derogatory about the folks who keep the campus running. With my mind partially made up, I dug in. But rather than being a diatribe of

the sufferings of the academic community, Professor Park assembled some interesting reflections on the challenges faced by the academic administration; something facility officers experience with regularity.

Roderick Park is a noted scholar and academic administrator. He rose through the academic ranks at UC Berkeley in the '60s and '70s, a time of excitement and turmoil at Berkeley. This is where the title of the book comes from. During one of the protests Park was dressed in casual attire but was called into the office late at night. His escape from the building, through the front door, was eased by an unknowing protestor saying, "It's only the janitor." Obviously, radical students don't view the O&M staff as a threat to their goals.

Park posits that, among other things, colleges and universities are inhabited by three types of people: the moderately transitory staff; the intransitory faculty; and the highly transitory students. These three different groups of people must be handled in different ways. Faculty are the most conservative, interested in conserving the status quo and campus organizational structure based on their consent. Students are the most liberal, and a new group with different ideals appears every four years.

The challenge for an academic making the move into administration is three fold:

- to understand the different types of people
- to navigate a successful career through the disparate ideas of the three groups

- to address the larger objective identified by the campus executives and the board of trustees or regents.

It's not an easy path to navigate and it's not getting any easier in the current economic climate.

While I cannot say this book is relevant to most APPA members (because the focus is toward academics,) the senior facility officer may find significant relevance in this book, and gain a greater understanding of what is needed to be successful.

#### SMART GREEN: HOW TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES IN ANY INDUSTRY, AND MAKE MONEY

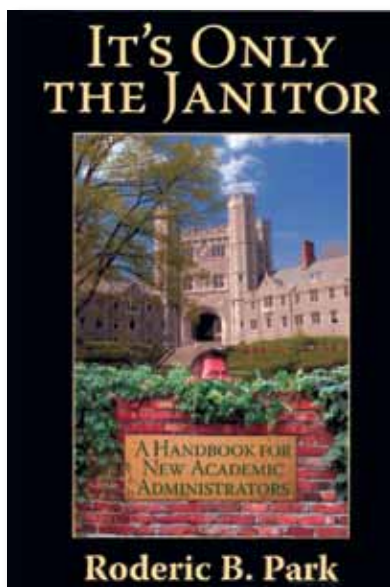
Jonathan Estes, Wiley, New York, 2010, 177 pages, hardcover, \$29.95.

Timing is everything, and I seldom achieve it. I received this book after making my presentation at APPA 2010 about my campus green initiatives that are not based on the Presidents

Climate Commitment. Had I read this book before, I might have made a more compelling argument. Obviously, I agree with the fundamental premise of the book, which is that the best reason to go green is to pursue the money behind the issue.

*Smart Green* is not anti-sustainability or any of the arguments in favor of it. *Smart Green* addresses the

issues of sustainability by finding the cost savings available through a more sustainable business operation, and leveraging it to meet societal as well as business needs. That's exactly what facility officers in APPA do every day. We



try to find economical methods to address the academic needs of the campus, teaching, research, and public outreach, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the physical infrastructure that the campus comprises.

Corporations are perceived as being focused on the short term, quarterly in-

**ESTES PRESENTS SEVERAL  
STEPS AND TECHNIQUES TO  
SUCCESSFUL SMART  
SUSTAINABILITY.**

come, and profits. They receive a great deal of criticism about this perceived focus. Colleges and universities, on the other hand, are focused on maintaining the academic mission usually in a single location for a hundred years or more. However, sustaining the organization's operation, whether it be profits for the shareholders or shepherding the next incoming freshman class through to graduation in four years, the importance of sustainability is the same. Colleges and universities have the added challenge that they are supposed to be about "setting an example" for the future.

I have occasionally argued that while colleges and universities are about developing social relevance and liberal thinking, we can't do that if we take our eyes off the basic drivers for sustainability and cost efficiency. Estes does a good job presenting the arguments for being sustainable and presents the false methods of "green washing" as being both unsustainable as well as not being cost efficient.

Estes presents several steps and techniques to successful smart sustainability. They are well organized with planning, measuring, building, and marketing the sustainability (cost-effective greening) efforts. There is nothing wrong with the pragmatic, business focus, even at a college or university. There IS, however, plenty wrong with ignoring the importance of sustainability even if the corporation or college is focused on the short term.

As we approach the new year I can think of no better way to make it successful by reading this book and adopting the recommendations for being more cost effective while being greener. §

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