Gibeault and Beard honored for distinguished service

Dr. Victor Gibeault of University of California-Riverside and James B. Beard, who retired last year from Texas A&M University, will receive the 1993 Distinguished Service Awards from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

The awards will be presented at the Golf Course Congress and Show in Anaheim, Calif.

Gibeault, an Extension environmental horticulturist at UC-Riverside, said word of the award "was a surprise. It's always an honor when you get any honor. But that particular award — for university people who work with turf and golf courses and students — is a very noted award and one that certainly I feel very honored in getting."

Among several areas of research at UC-Riverside the last 20 years that have affected turf in general, and golf specifically, Gibeault said, are turfgrass breeding and water use.

Gibeault has worked with the late Dr. Vic Younger and others in developing species of turfgrasses for the California market, notably hybrid Bermudagrass and Younger's El Toro zoysia grass. "We've taken El Toro as a particular area, evaluated offspring and developed two new grasses," Gibeault said — DeAnza and Younger's El Toro.

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Much work has involved water requirements of turf, the ability of plants to survive in less than optimum conditions for any of those purposes.

Gibeault has served on the U.S. Golf Association's Turfgrass and Environment Research Committee since 1985, working to assist in funding water-focused studies from plant breeding through to course studies. He also develops and implements educational and applied research projects in turfgrass management.

Beard, who could not be reached for comment, has been conducting turfgrass research for many years and has been honored with the USGA Green Section Award, and the International Turfgrass Society's Distinguished Service Award, among others.

He has been a consultant and conference speaker while also teaching and researching for four years at Purdue, 14 years at Michigan State, and the past 17 years at Texas A&M.

Anahiem the site of spec bid meeting

By Peter Blais

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Representatives from the national builders and architects associations will meet during the GCSAA show to start the process of standardizing bid schedules and specifications for course construction.

It's hoped the unofficial get together will lead to a formal proposal on bid schedules during the architects' annual spring meeting. Specifications will take longer.

Experts say standardizing these administrative tools should make it easier for builders to determine what an architect wants and develop more accurate bids; architects to interpret bids from various builders; and developers to get the best quality product at the best possible price and know they are comparing, as the saying goes, apples to apples.

"We want to standardize as much of each job as possible, while leaving architects the artistic freedom to do what they feel should be done at a particular site," said Hartland, Mich., builder Paul Clute, a member of a Golf Course Builders Association of America committee working on these issues with the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

Right now, a developer gets six to eight bids and he can't compare them. Standardizing as much as possible will make it easier to compare apples to apples when evaluating bids," added fellow committee member John MacDonald, a builder from
Building specifications

Continued from page 21

Jessup, Md., located just outside Washington, D.C.

"It would be a big help if we could all get on the same page with regard to bid schedules and specifications," said Spencer Holt, a staff architect in ASGCA President Art Hills' office.

Getting architects and engineers to agree on bid schedules should be easier than specifications, according to GCBAA Executive Director Phil Arnold.

Bid schedules list general areas of construction. They generally run three to four pages, acting as a sort of table of contents for the 30, 40 or more pages of specifications that follow.

While they may have different names, bid schedules include headings such as mobilization of manpower and equipment to the job site, layout and staking, erosion control, clearing, earth moving, shapping, drainage, irrigation, features (greens, tees, bunkers) construction, bridging, bulkheading, water features (ponds) development, cart paths, finish shaping, seed bed preparation, and grassing.

The builders committee submitted a first draft of a proposed bid schedule to Hills with suggested headings and items that would be included under each, MacDonald said.

One of the things all the committee members agreed on was the need for unit pricing instead of a lump sum charge for a single bid schedule item, MacDonald said.

"Unit pricing allows a builder to accurately adjust his bid if changes are made. If an architect decides to lower a fairway two feet, you can show him how much that will cost," MacDonald said.

Another reason to concentrate on bid schedules before specs is the potential cost of omissions, Clute said. Changing specifications from one kind of sand to another, for instance, can be expensive. But it's a minor cost compared to suddenly discovering the whole features construction line has been left out of a bid schedule.

Builders are keenly aware standardizing specifications will be a more difficult task. Some areas will be impossible since sites vary widely and architects need room to be creative. "You can't expect all bunkers to be three feet deep, for example," Clute said. Added MacDonald: "We're not telling architects what they can and can't do by trying to standardize specifications. We're simply offering information regarding things we know have worked in the past.

Still, there is tremendous room for standardizing certain items. Holt agreed. The architect estimated 70 percent of golf course construction is fairly consistent from job to job, leaving 30 percent to the whim of Nature, architect and developer.

"It's good builders realize we can deviate from the specifications if we come across unique circumstances where we can't use a standard practice. We don't want to be put in a box," Holt said.

Public Golf '92

Continued from previous page

and improve them, like giving a 30 percent discount from the rate on the green fee and cart combination."

Reid Pryor, golf administrator for the city of Indianapolis' 12 courses, said: "We have the staff involved in a very detailed customer service plan. Then, when it's in place, people come through the course as customers and give us feedback as to how we're performing according to our plan.

"Get the politicians involved. We show them our customer service plan, the benefits of quality golf, the impact on the city, our expenses, et cetera. They are now our greatest supporters."

"Use computers as cash registers. This helps keep account of who your customers are and how you can better sell," Potts said.

Kemper/Lesnik's vice president of marketing, Doug Schmidt, said: "The club pros are a marketing arm of our organization. They have a sense of ownership."

Schmidt suggested a course's exposure and image can be improved through the local media, charities and PGA affiliates, and added: "Go home and invite your local sports editor to play."

"We treat visitors like private clubs treat members," said Emerald Dunes owner Raymon Finch. "Don't be apologetic about a price. A price attracts a certain element."

Among Finch's suggestions: operate beverage carts on the course; price creatively; use volume cards; get name recognition using a billboard; use a marker at the tee to show pin placement; and start a beginners' league by converting the course into a beginner's layout on slow days.

Alfonso, co-owner of The Rail in Springfield, Ill., said: "Golf is an entertainment medium and should be fun. My concept with my staff is that people coming to The Rail have made a conscious choice (and maybe even created the finances) to spend money at our course. Show you care, by caring for the flowers, edging the grass, taking pride in the appearance of the entryway."

Alfonso is on radio daily, television weekly, and visibly supports the ballet, sports teams to charities in the Rail name.

Good advice — all.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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