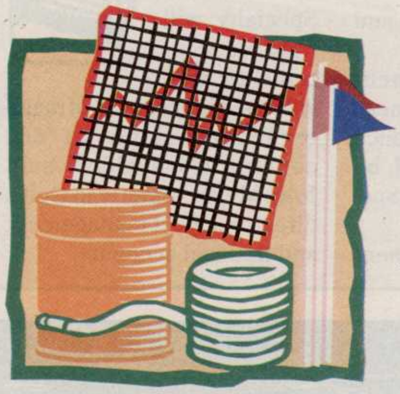
BRIEFS



PROFILE PROMOTES HAVEMAN

BUFFALO GROVE, Ill.—Profile Products L.L.C. announced the addition of Dennis Haveman as south central regional sales manager. Based in Dallas, Haveman's responsibilities include working with local Profile distributors and contacting golf course owners, superintendents and architects.

A certified golf course superintendent for more than 11 years, Haveman has worked as a golf course and construction superintendent on various projects across the southwest. He has also been the owner of Golf Consulting Services since 1995.

VW&R ADDS CASSERLEY, RAMOS

AUSTIN, Texas—Van Waters & Rogers Inc. (VW&R) announced that Sandra Casserly has joined the professional products and services business unit as a turf and landscape specialist.

Sandra Casserley

Casserly comes to VW&R with over nine years professional sales experience and will be responsible for covering South Central Texas.

VW&R also added Angela Ramos to the professional products and services business unit. She will be responsible for covering Southeast Florida.

HAMILTON TAKES POST FOR STN

ROBERTSDALE, Ala.—Southern Turf Nurseries has named John Hamilton as its consulting agronomist for golf course sales in central and southern Florida.

Hamilton has acquired 25 years of experience in the golf industry, and has a degree in agronomics from Purdue University. He has served as a golf course superintendent at various domestic locations as well as in Asia from 1989 to 1995.

ECO SOIL SELECTS CARROLL

RANCHO BERNARDO, Calif. — Eco Soil Systems, Inc. has named Jacob Carroll as its director of corporate development. Carroll joins Eco Soil from George K. Baum and Co., a Kansas City-based investment banking firm. He will focus on developing Eco Soil's future joint ventures and strategic partnerships.

Lesco profits bounce back

Company eyes future growth, brings in new VP, CFO

By ANDREW OVERBECK

ROCKY RIVER, Ohio — Following a rocky 1998 that saw its earnings and market share growth eaten up by rising costs, Lesco, Inc. has turned the corner with second-quarter sales up 12.1 percent and net income up 23.3 percent over comparable numbers last year.

At the root of last year's profit difficulties were ambitious expansion plans.

"We did have a difficult earnings year in 1998," said William Foley, Lesco chairman, president and chief executive officer. "But we also opened 20 new stores, built a new fertilizer plant, started up a joint venture and had two acquisitions. It was a lot to put our arms around, but it was all strategic to position the business for the future."

William Foley

The largest cost factor in 1998 stemmed from the newly formed Commercial Turf Products, Ltd., (CTP) a 50/50 joint venture between Lesco and longtime consumer lawn care equipment manufacturer, MTD Products Inc.

"We had a number of problems," said Foley. "We missed our sales objective and that cost us $2 million, and we had serious cost start-up issues that cost us another $2 million."

According to Foley, these costs were necessary in order to maintain the performance of Lesco's equipment business. "We felt that in the longer term we didn't have the technological expertise to sustain the equipment business at the proper level," said Foley. "So we worked out this relationship with MTD."

The new plant in Streetsboro produces commercial mowing equipment, renovation equipment, spreaders and sprayers and is now running at expected levels. Increased sales from the joint venture are the key reason behind Lesco's improved bottom line. "We are getting triple the revenue out of the CTP plant this year, which is a big step up," said Foley.

However the CTP start up was not the only source of profit pressure felt by Lesco. "The construction of a new fertilizer plant in Florida was delayed for 120 days due to El Nino rains and led to horrible cost over-runs," said Foley. "And we have had to continue to factor in significant price pressures and lower margins on ryegrass for the overseeding market."

However, these short-term growing pains are already leading to increased prof-

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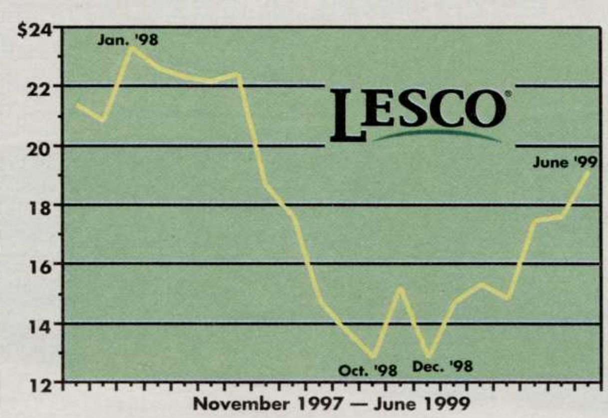

THE UPS AND DOWNS *of Lesco's stock price per share*

Yazoo/Kees picks up CheTech

By ANDREW OVERBECK

JACKSON, Miss. — Aiming to become a player in the utility vehicle market, Yazoo/Kees Power Equipment, based here, acquired the CheTech Company, PUG, Inc. and Applied Design Technology of Chetek, Wis.

Yazoo/Kees, a manufacturer of walk-behind and riding mowers, will add the CheTech line of utility vehicles to its existing Haul Master line that it purchased from Mendota, Ill.-based HCC, Inc. in February.

ACQUISITIONS

"The utility vehicle market is growing and we intend to be a very serious player," said Bill Chestnut, director of the utility product division at Yazoo/Kees. "CheTech offers a wide variety of vehicles and Yazoo/Kees brings the marketing and manufacturing capability to grow this business substantially, and that's exactly what we intend to do."

While CheTech has been in the utility vehicle business since the 1960s, the company never fully reached its growth potential according to Chestnut. "It was a family-owned company," said Chestnut. "They took the business to a certain level, but to make that leap into the bigger market it takes a lot of funding and financial backing."

Yazoo/Kees will maintain

Continued on page 46

Eco Soil secures credit line, announces earnings

RANCHO BERNARDO, Calif. — Eco Soil Systems, Inc. announced that it has obtained a $25 million revolving line of credit for its wholly owned subsidiary Turf Partners Inc.

"This will better serve Turf Partners' financing requirements given its significant growth and success in servicing the golf industry," said Mark D. Buckner, chief financial officer for Eco Soil.

The credit line gives Turf Partners working capital financing and allows the purchase of inventory needed to meet the high demand in the summer season.

"The line will support our working capital requirements at Turf Partners for the foreseeable future and may improve operating margins by achieving vendor discounts for volume purchases and early payments," said Buckner.

In other news, the company announced revenues for the three months ended June 30, 1999 of $40.7 million compared to $26.9 million during the same period in 1998. Net income for the quarter was $1.1 million. Eco Soil's turf business reportedly accounted for $34.2 million of its second quarter-earninings.

NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

LasTec introduces the model 425D to its growing product line. The 425D combines a floating rotary mower with its own hydrostatic drive and a Kubota 38-hp, water-cooled diesel engine to produce a zero-turn-radius, powerful, wide-area contouring riding mower. It features four individual 25-inch articulating mower decks, comprising a total cut path of eight feet. LasTec's patented drive belt system allows the mower decks to float over contoured turf. The 425D can handle mounded, contoured or hilly areas—without scalping, scuffing or missing grass. It has a wider wheel-base and lower center of gravity that provides for greater side-hill stability as well as safer operation on severe terrain. For more information, contact 1-800-515-6798.