

BRIEFS



**CHRISTIANS: OUTLOOK GOOD**

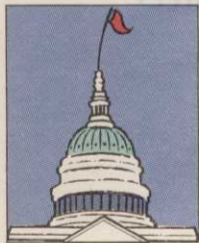
The job market will remain strong for this fall's 125 students of Iowa State University's turf management and horticulture programs, professor Nick Christians said during the August meeting of the Iowa Golf Course Superintendents Association. "There appears to be a downturn in business and engineering jobs and those students are coming to us," the ISU educator said. The IGCSA announced an Oct. 20 deadline for the return of scholarship applications. Last year, the organization awarded \$4,000 to six students. For more information contact 319-378-9203.

**FOCUS ON STRESS MANAGEMENT**

Turfgrass stress management will be the topic at three separate seminars sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendents Association and its local chapters. The sessions will be held Oct. 12 in Billings, Mont.; Oct. 27 in Portland, Maine; and Jan. 11 in Charlotte, N.C. The instructor is Dr. Joseph DiPaola, formerly of North Carolina State University and currently a senior technical support specialist for a major turf and ornamental products manufacturer. For more information contact 800-472-7878.

**BIODIVERSITY TREATY VOTE DELAYED**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Its switchboard swamped by a reported 1 million phone calls over three days, the U.S. Senate voted in mid-August to postpone a vote on the international Convention on Biological Diversity. Many from the golf industry responded to a call to block ratification of the treaty, according to Dr. Michael S. Coffman, who spearheaded the effort. Emanating from the 1992 Earth Summit, the treaty was not signed by then-President George Bush, but has since been signed by President Bill Clinton. The most extraordinary aspect of the Biodiversity Treaty, Coffman said, "is that it is already being implemented in the United States, even before it has been ratified by the Senate."



**MAINE FUND-RAISER**

ARUNDEL, Maine — The Maine Golf Superintendents Association's annual golf tournament to raise money for scholarships for students studying turfgrass culturing and to support turfgrass research will be held at Cape Arundel Golf Club here, Sept. 20. Further information is available from the MGCSA office at 207-781-7878.

**WYNSTONE, MUIRFIELD LEAD THE WAY...**

**Turf-saving urethane spikes winning converts nationwide**

By MARK LESLIE

In this high-technology era, golf course superintendents have water-injecting aerators, weather satellites, computerized irrigation systems and floating mower decks. They have deep-tine aerifiers, turf groomers and even grasses that can withstand a flood of effluent. But some greenskeepers feel the greatest advancement is a product made for players: Softspikes for golf shoes.

"In 20 years this is the best thing I've seen in the areas of golf balls, clubs and maintenance," said John Malloy, former superintendent at Wynstone Golf Club in North Barrington, Ill., who is now growing in the Jack Nicklaus-designed Berrypath Golf and Country Club in Eden

Prairie, Minn. "It's something everybody could use and save a lot of wear and tear."

When Scioto Country Club in Columbus, Ohio, bought Softspikes for its members, the spikes' popularity "leapt and grew. We had a tremendous response," said superintendent Mark Yoder.

Agronomically, financially, and in terms of wear and tear on the golf course, the clubhouse and equipment, Softspikes are winning converts by the droves.

Four high-profile clubs — Wynstone first, then Scioto, Pine Valley Golf Club in Clementon, N.J., and Muirfield Village in Dublin, Ohio — have led the way, mandating that the urethane Softspikes be worn on their courses.

"In this area it has caught on at a lot other clubs," said Yoder, adding: "All the guests get new Softspikes for no charge. They're geared up in the locker room to change the spikes quickly. If the golfers want their old spikes put back on, they'll do that, too. But no one does, they are so much more comfortable."

"What we're trying to do in the end," said Malloy, "is improve the condition of golf courses. This is one thing a player can do himself without costing [the golf course] an agonomic price tag."

The plusses are many, according to Malloy and Yoder.

- "It will save a club \$10,000 to \$20,000 a year just in damage to a course's carts and bridges and carpeting in the

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Members of the Pine Valley Country Club maintenance crew relax during last year's annual barbecue.

**Event: Party at Fort Wayne's Pine Valley  
Object: Show appreciation to crew**

By PETER BLAIS

FORT WAYNE, Ind. — Party on Fort Wayne.

That's the call heard at Pine Valley Country Club in early August when a group of 25 or so members get together, toss in \$100 apiece and throw a mid-season bash for superintendent Steve Mueller's grounds crew.

"It's a way of saying thanks for all the hard work they do to keep the course in shape," said course member Jim Reifenberg.

This year's 4th annual celebration was held Monday, Aug. 1, a day the course is normally closed for maintenance.

Organizers combined course and crew members into teams and staged a Florida

Scrambles tournament. Chipping and putting contests followed.

During the hamburger and hot dog barbecue that afternoon, crew members on the winning teams received cash prizes based on their team's performance during the tournament and skills contests.

The affair was topped off by a raffle during which every crew member received between \$40 and \$200.

"I've worked at three other courses and I've never seen anything like this," Mueller said. "It's a very friendly club. The course members talk to the crew and get to know them very well."

Long-time course member Hughie Johnston first proposed the party as a way

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**Lab changes will propel EPA into future**

From Staff Reports

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Carol Browner plans to move expeditiously to implement laboratory plans she believes "will shape the agency's science program for many years to come."

Responding to recommendations made by a Steering Committee, Browner is poised to move EPA "to the cutting edge of government science." In a memorandum to EPA employees, she said she wants to ensure that "the implementation process focuses on issues such as diversity, empowerment, and a shifting of resources from supervisory and administrative tasks

to scientific and technical work, wherever possible."

Browner's decision comes on the heels of her demand that the EPA improve its peer-review policy — a beleaguered set of procedures that have led to claims the EPA is "held hostage" to uneven science.

Declaring a Nov. 1 deadline, Browner has called on implementation groups to report to her with specific action plans. They are to address Steering Committee recommendations on mission and management — which Browner concurs with — including:

- Designating four national laboratories

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**Atlantic supers build research green in Truro**

By MARK LESLIE

TRURO, Nova Scotia, Canada — You walk before you run. So the Atlantic Golf Superintendents Association has built an experimental green before it dives into a full-fledged turfgrass research institution.

"Basically, our long-range plans are to have a turfgrass research center" at Nova Scotia Agricultural College, said Blake Palmer. The superintendent at Rockwood Park Golf Course in St. John, New Brunswick, Palmer is chairman of the newly formed Atlantic Turfgrass Research Foundation (ATRF) and a past president of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association.

The Guelph Turfgrass Institute at the University of Guelph in Ontario does the bulk of turfgrass research in Canada, but "their growing conditions are not like ours in Atlantic Canada," Palmer said, an ex-board member of the Canadian Turfgrass Research Foundation, which funds Guelph research. "You have to grow grass here to understand how difficult it is. We get everything but the kitchen sink thrown at us in the wintertime."

ATRF members hope to rectify the research gulf.

One step in that direction is being taken by the Department of Environment and Department of Agriculture, which are conducting a joint \$230,000 research project dealing with integrated pest management.

Eight or nine golf courses in Nova Scotia are working with Department of Environment plant pathologist Linda Rankin in the three-year project, now in its second year.

The research green at Nova

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GCSAA UPDATE

## Management is streamlined in new leadership lineup

LAWRENCE, Kan. — A new management structure and staffing — “more efficient, more effective and more reflective of the needs of today’s superintendent” — have been announced by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

The changes are needed to allow GCSAA to reach its objective of becoming one of the finest service organizations in the country by the turn of the century, said GCSAA Chief Executive Officer Stephen F. Mona.

Key changes involve:

- Creation of three departments in the areas of chapter relations, career development and technical information services.
- Consolidation of public relations, government relations and publications and advertising sales functions into a single communications department.
- Merging marketing functions with management of the annual GCSAA trade show and golf championship.

### NEW DEPARTMENTS

Former manager of Pacific Rim

operations Don Bretthauer and former Director of Education David Bishop have filled two of three leadership roles for the new departments.

Bretthauer is manager of chapter/international relations, while Bishop is manager of technical information services.

A manager of career development will be named in coming months.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Pat Jones, former director of development, has been appointed director of communications. He succeeds Clay Loyd, who has retired. Christ Caldwell, former managing editor of GCSAA’s Golf Course Management (GCM), has been named editor-in-chief. Terry Ostmeyer, former special projects editor for GCM, has been appointed managing editor. Sharmion Linseisen, former assistant editor, is associate editor.

Dr. Jeff Nus, technical editor for GCM, has assumed added duties of manager of research. Carol Hayes, former manager of communications, is manager of executive communications.

### TRADE SHOW

Robert Shively has moved from his post as director of marketing and sales to director of marketing/conference and show. Bonnie Stephenson, former conference coordinator, has moved to manager of conference events. Pam Owens, who has been manager of exhibit sales, has been appointed manager of expositions and tournament.

Meanwhile, former Director of Administration Patricia McCarthy has been named director of central services. Marc Lim has changed jobs from computer operations coordinator to manager of management information services. Past Administrative Assistant Gwen Denton is now manager of human resources. Former production clerk Beverly Schuster is supervisor of the mail and production center.

Jennifer McCaughey, past membership coordinator, has been appointed manager of membership. Betsy Evans, former regional seminar coordinator, is manager of regional seminars.

Nationwide searches are underway to fill five management positions and vacancies created by the realignment.

## Courses outlawing metal golf spikes

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clubhouse,” Malloy said.

• “Metal spikes ruin mower blades,” Yoder said. “We’ve saved several thousand dollars this year already.”

Malloy, who was superintendent at Wynstone when the Green Committee bought the first two pair of Softspikes for each of its nearly 300 members, said, “Probably six times a year a [mower operator] will run over a spike or cleat with a reel, and you trash a \$250 reel.”

• Quality turf can be maintained better with the urethane spikes, too.

The metal spike creates a perfect seed bed for poa annua, transporting the poa from one course to another, while Softspikes do not.

Metal spikes pull up the turfgrass runners. Softspikes do not.

And, some suggest that a new golf course can be grown in faster if players wear the urethane spikes. They say that since the grass is tender and has little thatch buildup, Softspikes will do less damage and allow the turf to mature faster.

Golf course operators might equate a quicker course opening — with urethane spikes — to more money in the bank as well.

“Is it agronomically saving me thousands a year?” Yoder asked. “I don’t think so. But it’s sure easier on the greens. We no longer have spiked-up greens, which is tremendous.”

“I saw a lot of guys get beat up last year with the wet conditions,” Malloy said. “But I wore Softspikes in deplorable, wet conditions and couldn’t damage the turf even if I tried. I went back to my mother ship and told my green committee, ‘I think I’ve got the trick for your spike-marked greens.’”

Checking his greens one day after they had absorbed about 240 rounds, Malloy found they “looked like the they did when they were mowed. The putting conditions were identical at 3 in the afternoon as at 7 in the morning, as far as spike marks are concerned.”

“We’ve had three major golf tournaments held exclusively on Softspikes [including the Ohio Amateur at Scioto and two tournaments at Muirfield Village],” said Softspikes, Inc. Vice President of Sales and Marketing Brian Golden from his Alexandria, Va., headquarters. “The players who, late in the day, had the same greens to putt on as the first off really appreciated it.”

So what are the disadvantages to Softspikes?

They don’t last as long, Malloy said, adding, “You probably have to change every 20 to 30 rounds, depending on how much concrete you walk on.”

They tend to be slippery on wet wood surfaces and very steep wet slopes, Yoder added.

Nothing else, unless the \$7.95 per pair of shoes (less when bought in bulk) scares people off.

Golden reported that 10 facilities now ban metal spikes — a figure he expects to grow, and even skyrocket if the golf shoe manufacturers climb onto the bandwagon. “Manufacturers make their profits on the shoe, not the spikes. They should have no qualms about changing over,” Golden said. “Several manufacturers are interested and we should know more in the fall.”

Golden’s group began operating Softspikes last October and has been aggressively marketing the spikes since the end of January, he said. It began seeing success in April.

Softspikes, Inc. is located at 5800 Farrington Ave., Alexandria, Va. 22304; telephone 800-638-0075.

## Clay Loyd retires after 10 years

Clay Loyd, director of communications and publications for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, retired June 30 and is at work on his first book.

Loyd’s career with GCSAA began in October 1983 as director of communications. Under his leadership, GCSAA’s flagship magazine, *Golf Course Management*, grew steadily over the past 10 years.

Loyd is a 1956 graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

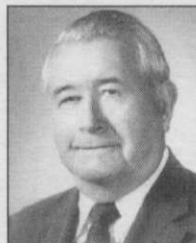
Prior to joining GCSAA, he was director of public relations for the Kansas National Education Association, and had been editorial page editor for the *Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal*.

Loyd plans to continue his long-time career in journalism, and is already at work on his first book.

## Rose leaves post

Janet Rose, director of membership for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) since 1987, has accepted the position of executive director for the Los Alamos (N.M.) County Chamber of Commerce.

Rose joined the GCSAA membership department in 1984. As membership director since 1987, Rose’s responsibilities were membership promotion and retention, as well as benefits and services to the association’s nearly 13,700 members. These services included insurance and health benefits, merchandise and reference material programs, job referral opportunities, chapter relations and coordination of the GCSAA Golf Championship and annual meeting.



Dr. James Watson

## Watson to be presented Old Tom Morris Award

Citing his career as exemplifying how “one person can make a tremendous impact on an entire

profession,” the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) has selected Dr. James Watson to receive the Old Tom Morris Award.

“Dr. Jim has been a great friend to GCSAA and its members for half a century,” said GCSAA President Joseph G. Baidy. “We are delighted to be able to pay tribute to the contributions he has made.”

GCSAA established the Old Tom Morris Award in 1982 to recognize individuals who have made outstanding lifetime contributions to the game. The award is named in memory of Old Tom Morris (1821-1908), greenkeeper and golf professional at the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland.

Following military service in World War II, Watson earned a bachelor’s degree in agronomy from Texas A&M University in 1947. He obtained his doctorate in agronomy from the Pennsylvania State University in 1950.

As a graduate student at Penn State,

Watson was the recipient of the United States Golf Association (USGA) Green Section fellowship and studied under the famed Dr. Burton Musser. He returned to A&M to serve as an assistant agronomy professor and conduct turfgrass research.

In 1952, Watson left A&M to begin his career with The Toro Co. as director of agronomy. For over four decades with Toro, his research touched on nearly every aspect of turfgrass management. Later as the company’s agronomist and vice president of customer relations, he led Toro’s efforts in equipment development and evaluation, and served as the liaison to professional groups such as GCSAA.

Watson has received many awards, including the USGA Green Section Award (1976), the American Society of Agronomy’s Agronomic Service Award (1977), GCSAA’s Distinguished Service Award (1983) and the American Society of Golf Course Architects Donald Ross Award (1994).

He will be honored during the closing banquet of GCSAA’s 66th International Golf Course Conference and Show, next Feb. 27, in San Francisco.

## Association donates \$25,000 to USGA

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) made a \$25,000 contribution to the United States Golf Association’s (USGA) Environmental Research Program.

During the donation presentation, GCSAA President Joseph G. Baidy said, “As we all know, golf is facing heightened environmental awareness from the media and the public.

“This awareness is creating concerns that influence the management of our

existing courses and the development of new ones.

“The issue of golf and the environment is extremely vital to the future of the game. The results from the USGA’s Environmental research program should provide a better understanding of how golf courses can minimize their effects on the environment, as well as give golf a solid foundation for future research. Through this donation, GCSAA is proud to be a part of these efforts.”