

BRIEFS



CHRISTIANS: OUTLOOK GOOD

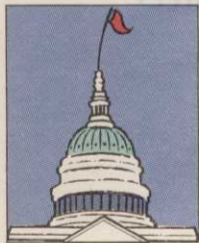
The job market will remain strong for this fall's 125 students of Iowa State University's turf management and horticulture programs, professor Nick Christians said during the August meeting of the Iowa Golf Course Superintendents Association. "There appears to be a downturn in business and engineering 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 Bepath 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 of 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

Continued on page 31



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

Continued on page 28

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

Continued on page 17

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

Continued on page 28

One equals dozens in world of appointments

By MARK LESLIE

WASHINGTON, D.C. — When the Clinton Administration took over, more than one person moved into the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Carol Browner's entourage: dozens. Their effect: acute, for some.

Although 95 to 97 percent of what one administration does is identical to its predecessors, EPA golf liaison officer Mike Scott said the other 3 to 5 percent magnifies and personifies the change in viewpoint.

"There is a common myth that by the time this stuff filters down, the bureaucrats don't even notice," Scott said. "I don't know how that is in other agencies, but ... within our fairly cozy agency of only 18,000 people, I'm acutely aware of policy changes from one administration to the next. They influence things I do on a daily basis, and I think that's true of most of the bureaucrats.

"Public Affairs is directly connected to the administrator, so I will notice more of that than most people. But, yes, the direction that an administrator and the assistant administrator for research and development wants for the science programs here will affect the daily operation of scientists."

When Browner moved into the EPA directorship, she was not alone as a presidential appointee there. A dozen presidential appointees moved into place, heading every program office — among them the Office of Air and Radiation, Pesticides and Toxics, Solid Waste, Water, Research and Development, Policy Planning, Congressional Affairs, Public Affairs, and State and Local Relations.

And each of those presidential appointees brought with them their immediate staffs, who are not presidential appointees but political appointees.

Known as "Schedule Cs," political appointees are people who probably worked on the campaign or were on somebody's congressional staff before being appointed.

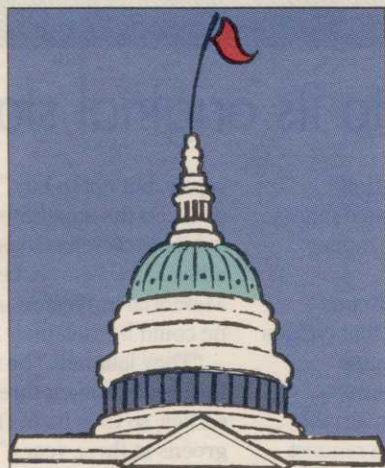
"Add all those folks up, and a few presidentially appointed deputies under them, and you're well into the dozens for EPA alone," Scott said. "And they make their presence known."

How large a role does politics play in the Clinton Administration?

"Statements Carol Browner has made on chlorine and turf pesticides have been very non-scientific, and with some other agenda," said Stuart Cohen, who worked for EPA for 11 years and is now president of Environmental & Turf Services, Inc. in Wheaton, Md. "They have been either based on poor science or no science. With regard to actions, I'm a little distressed that EPA seems to be putting more emphasis on being concerned about detections of pesticides in ground water, period, as opposed to detections of concentrations that might cause some problem.

"In regard to surface water, I'm very pleased EPA is recognizing the important role that computer simulation modeling plays in risk assessment."

Though the head of the Pesticide and Toxics Program is a pediatrician, Browner has appointed more scientists than most past administrators, Scott said. "Basically the agency has been run by scientists and attorneys — not surprisingly, since those are the two key areas of EPA's work. By sheer mathematical probability, we would have had



EPA history fraught with deadlines unmet

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner has called for a new policy on scientific peer review to be in place by late September.

Amidst the storm over the agency's non-policy, the General Accounting Office said, "EPA has had difficulty meeting deadlines even without the requirement to conduct peer reviews supporting scientific and technical products."

It said:

- EPA has not established milestones or deadlines for its work group, appointed in early 1993, to develop specific implementation procedures.

- The internal work group which first met in 1993 to develop procedures for managers in peer review decisions has no deadline and as of last December had not even addressed how it plans to deal with flexibility issues such as determining which products should receive peer reviews.

- The panel addressing peer review accountability "has just begun its efforts and has not set a date for recommending a solution," the GAO said.

- And although last year an EPA report on environmental tobacco smoke was prematurely released by an external reviewer, as of late February the agency had not developed procedures to preclude premature release from happening again.

The GAO said a simple stamp "Draft" on a document could be sufficient.

And, until implementation policies are established, the report said, "the universal peer review policy is not likely to have much effect."

a few people from business. But, I'm hard put to think of anyone who has come to the EPA with a background in industry.

"It would be nice if we had some. And it's not just this administration."

Although Browner does not come out of "the science culture itself... she recognizes the importance of strong science and good data as one of her six major themes," said Dr. Don Barnes, executive secretary of the EPA's Scientific Advisory Board. "She's philosophically committed to good science."

He pointed to her appointment of Dr. Bob Huggett to the new post of assistant administrator for the Office of Research and Development. From the Institute of Marine Sciences at the College of William and Mary, Huggett has been a member of the SAB for several years.

EPA labs to be combined, upgraded

Continued from page 13

for the Office of Research and Development (ORD) to ease organization along the lines of risk.

- Thoroughly integrating peer review in all scientific and technical products.

- Developing a Science Strategic Plan, guided by a single policy-maker in coordination with the Science Policy Council and Senior Leadership Council.

- Developing a new planning process with cross-agency involvement in the distribution of the agency's research, development and technical services resources.

- Establishing the risk paradigm as the driver for prioritization of resources and organizational changes.

- Increasing the percentage of the ORD budget set-aside for long-term research from the current 35 percent to 50 percent.

- Achieving greater outreach to the scientific community by increasing extramural research from \$20 million to \$100 million in competitive, investigator-initiated grants.

- Creating an internal, investigator-initiated competitive research program to fund innovative ideas and improve the quality of intramural science.

- Expanding the graduate fellowship

program to train a cadre of new scientists for EPA and the country.

Streamlining and re-invention are Browner's goals, she said. Consolidation of the labs is the one issue Browner wants to delay — "until at least June 1996" — because of the labs' complex physical and functional nature.

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Pointing out that the EPA is seeking to gain more accurate laboratory results, U.S. Golf Association Green Section National Director Jim Snow added, "The lab work is only as good as its quality control."

That is where an improved peer-review process is crucial. And Browner expects by Sept. 30 to have a new peer-review policy in place.

Also, in a mid-summer press release the EPA announced "a new broad-range process for developing agency regulations ... to make government more efficient and less costly."

The process will "enable EPA to produce rules more quickly, at less cost and of a higher quality," the agency said. "It will require fewer clearances and greater assurance that rules are based on sound science. Scientific work to support the rules will require more peer review."

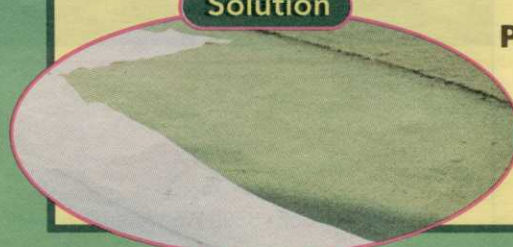
How To Improve Your Course's Biggest Handicap.

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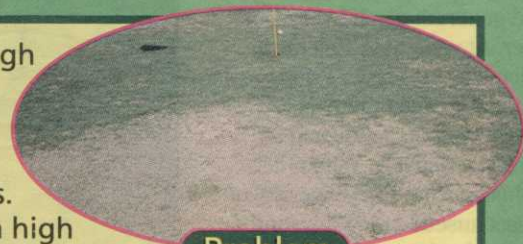
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Problem



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