

BRIEFS



**ALTER REPLACES STARLING AT PENN**

BELLEFONTE, Pa. — Dr. Theodore R. Alter, professor and head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, has been named interim dean of the college. Alter succeeds the retiring James L. Starling, interim dean and professor of agronomy who had served in that capacity since January. Alter will serve in the post for one year or until a new dean is hired.

**RUTGERS FIELD DAY PLANNED**

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. — The 31st Field Day turfgrass seminar and exposition will be held at the Rutgers University golf course/stadium complex



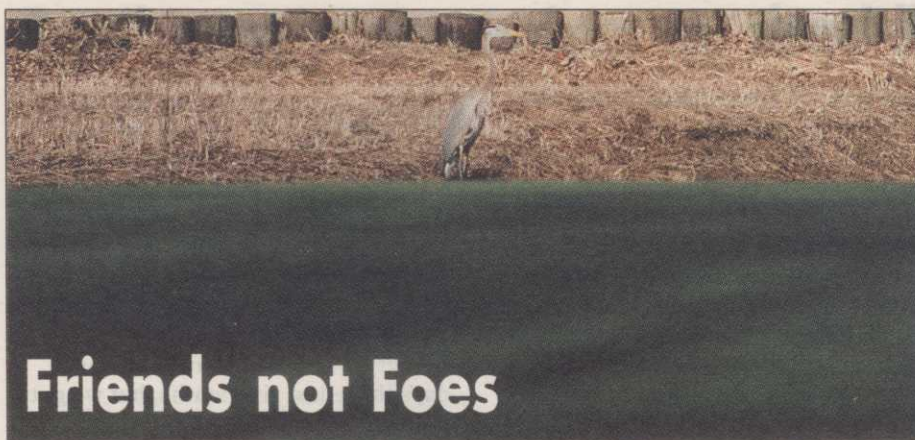
on Oct. 8, 1996. After a three-year hiatus due to stadium and bubble construction, the 1996 Field Day committee under the direction of Joe Kennedy has prepared an "Emporium of Turf Related Delights." The event will be hosted by Mike Mongon. The expo will feature traditional equipment demonstrations and boots along with guest speakers, stadium tours and door prizes.

**TPI SETS RECORD STRAIGHT**

ROLLING MEADOWS, Ill. — Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) has published "TurfgrassFacts" fact sheets spelling out what it terms "anti-turfgrass statements" and dispels them with "The Real Grass Facts." The TPI fact sheets tackle such topics as exaggerated pesticide fears, whether turfgrass is a wasteful water hog, whether lawns are a waste of time and money, and grass clippings in landfills. TPI can be reached at 1855-A Hicks Road, Rolling Meadows, Ill. 60008; telephone 800-405-8873.

**IRRIGATION ASSN. SETS CONCLAVE**

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — The Irrigation Association's 17th annual International Irrigation Exposition and the American Society of Agricultural Engineers Technical Conference will be held from Nov. 3-6 at the San Antonio Convention Center. The Irrigation Association's exposition will be held Nov. 3-5 and feature North American and international companies. The ASAE Technical Conference will run from Nov. 4-6. The three-day schedule of sessions and speakers will cover current topics in evapotranspiration and irrigation in the farming and turfgrass fields.



**Friends not Foes**

Sand Creek Country Club attracts and sustains a wide variety of birds and other wildlife.

**Superintendents devise innovative new ways to push wildlife envelope**

By MARK LESLIE

CASTING aside the "chemical revolution" of the past, golf course superintendents have taken a long trek toward heightened environmental awareness, adding innovative twists of their own to the standard Audubon fare.

Witness Director of Grounds Don Ewoldt of Sand Creek Country Club in Chesterton, Ind., who started a Junior Conservation Society among his club members' children.

Or, John Netwal of Glynn's Creek Golf Club in a county park in Long

Grove, Iowa, who takes interested campers on a tour of his course, then gives them bird boxes to place in their own backyards.

Or, Hank Kerfoot of Carmel Country Club in Charlotte, N.C., who with his wife this fall will instruct K-12 teachers about the outdoors and wildlife in a new program called Project Learning Tree.

"I farmed for 35 years and have been in this business for 15," said Ewoldt, "and I'll tell you: Golf courses are the least of our problems. I look back and cringe at what I did [on the farm]. So many homeowners are causing much more problems than golf course managers. Granted, we manage a lot more property, but we're doing it right."

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**First soil labs certified**

By MARK LESLIE

NEW KNOXVILLE, Ohio — Stepping away from a history wrought with contrasting methods and interpretations, soil laboratories are moving to standardize performance and enhance their reliability in testing root-zone mixes used in greens construction.

Brookside Laboratories, Inc. here and Thomas Turf Services in College Station, Texas, have become the first soil-testing labs accredited by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (AALA). The accreditation program was spearheaded by the U.S. Golf Association, whose greens-construction recommendations are recognized as the industry standard.

"Different results from different labs affected everybody's reputation," said USGA Green Section National Director Jim Snow. "Accreditation tightens the standard all around and the whole industry will be served by it."

"Also, from a liability standpoint, it will help if you have a good quality-control program in place and are being tested regularly."

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**Norman stakes claim in Bermudagrass market**

By HAL PHILLIPS

SOUTH LAKE LAND, Fla. — With more than 400 golf course openings projected for 1996, September's opening of The Club at Eaglebrook here shouldn't cause too much of a stir... Right?

Wrong. The Club at Eaglebrook, designed by Ron Garl, is the first course in the United States to have 18 holes of GN-1, the new fairway Bermudagrass strain marketed by Greg Norman Turf Co.

Several other GN-1 projects are in various stages of development. Sugarloaf, the Norman-designed course outside Atlanta

and future home of the Bell South Classic, will feature GN-1, as will Real Mar, another Norman design under construction in Puerto Rico. Also, The Medalist Club — a Norman/Pete Dye collaboration in Hobe Sound, Fla. — has two holes grassed with the new Bermuda.

However, Eaglebrook will be the first fully operational golf course featuring the hybrid Bermuda on all 18 fairways. Consequently, warm-climate superintendents, architects and sod growers across the country are eager to see how the new grass fares.

"It looks fantastic," reported Eaglebrook

superintendent Bob Wagner in mid-July. "I've had three superintendent jobs... and they've all been grow-ins. And this stuff [GN-1] grows like wildfire. It's green as can be and it's very aggressive. We started sprigging April 16 and by the end of May it was completely covered."

"Time will tell and it's hard to predict what extra things I might have to do. But everything I've seen so far has been real encouraging."

GN-1 is the first commercial release

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**DuPont design improves grounds crew's morale**

By MARK LESLIE

LANDENBERG, Pa. — When DuPont Country Club determined its maintenance facility would be "world-class and compete among the best," some say it went one better: It became the best.

"We feel it has done good things for the morale of the crew as well as their professionalism," said Earl Shafer, head superintendent at the 54-hole club. "It's a source of pride. It sets a tone. And when you have visitors, it shows your professionalism. It's not an old-barn, out-in-the-woods operation."

No, indeed. Dupont CC's maintenance structure met and exceeded its needs so fully that Shafer said, "The only problem is, we are running out of phone capacity and could use a larger cable." That's because some of the folks in the clubhouse took a fancy to extra space in the two-story building and moved in their operations.

But they didn't move in before Shafer accomplished his purposes. Namely:

- Individual offices — of "sufficient size to be private" — for Shafer, his three golf course superintendents, a landscape



DuPont Country Club's table lift greatly improves safety and working conditions.



SHOP TALK

coordinator and an administrator responsible for the workforce and safety programs.

Shafer and the superintendents had all shared an office of about 4 by 10 feet, he said.

- A lunch room that seats 50 people. "That's our peak," he said. "We wanted a lunch room that would be comfortable and clean. And we have snack and soda machines, a television, and refrigerators to store lunches. We were eating in the shop and you can't — and shouldn't — do that."

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## Labs certified

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"My feeling," said Brookside Agriculture Division Director Mark Flock, "was that as long as everybody is using the same methods and as long as we have a sample exchange program and get a handle on the variabilities between labs — and if everybody would participate — it would be great. We should keep it so it is not a policing force, but an assistance to the labs."

Thus far, two other labs are nearing accreditation and "a number are actively working towards applying for accreditation," said Roxanne Robinson, vice president of the Gaithersburg, Md.-based AALA. "If they [labs] sat back on their heels to see if the others were going to seek accreditation, now they are scrambling a little bit."

"It isn't an easy thing because so many of these labs have been operating for years not looking at any kind of specific quality-system standards, and suddenly the USGA has said, 'You will now meet AALA requirements...'"

Robinson said the problem with most soil-testing laboratories has not been technical, but rather "internal audits, document control, complaint handling, corrective actions, management reviews — those kinds of quality-systems support that are necessary to shore up the technical aspects."

"To me, the AALA makes you do an excellent job of quality control," said Flock, whose company was the first out of the blocks in attaining accreditation. "But it will be the sample exchange that will show if the tests themselves can be compared between labs as far as precision and accuracy is concerned."

The "sample exchange" he mentioned is being established by Drs. Bob Miller of the University of California-Davis and Janice Kotuby-Amacher of Utah State, who operate a similar program for agriculture labs through their Western States Testing Program (WSTP). According to Snow, a soil sample will be sent quarterly to labs to run tests and send the results to WSTP. WSTP will analyze the results and inform the labs if they are within reasonable standards.

"Some labs are going to participate in this program even though they are not going to be accredited," Snow added.

"The sample exchange will show if the labs can produce similar results," Flock said. "There is a certain amount of variability with every test. But right now we don't know exactly what that variation is for some of these tests. Not until we get the sample exchange between labs, and the same methodology and start discussing these differences will we know what to expect."

"For the reason of liability, we

will recommend accredited labs," Snow said, "and eventually, if you want to be in the business you will have to be accredited. Architects will do the same."

Mentioning a "core group" of six to eight soil-testing laboratories, Flock said: "If they get their accreditation, we get the sample exchange going and iron out any differences within the same procedures, I would think the contractors, engineers and architects will be very pleased. They can have a lot more confidence in the results."

AALA's Robinson said the ini-

tial cost of accreditation is around \$4,000 to \$5,000. Most of that cost is paying the expenses of a visit by an AALA representative — either Dr. Don Waddington, retired from Penn State University, or Dr. Bill Dest of the University of Connecticut.

"Those are the AALA fees," she said. "The time, energy and manpower they have to put into getting the quality system in their laboratory ready for an assessment would have to be considered as well."

The laboratories will have an annual review and be re-accredited every two years.

## Pa. Turfgrass Council elects Kuhns and Smith to board

KING OF PRUSSIA, Pa. — The Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council (PTC) has re-elected Michael Smith of Gulph Mills Golf Club here and Mark Kuhns of Oakmont Country Club to its board of directors.

The PTC Secretary/Treasurer, Smith is chairman of the 1997 Eastern Pennsylvania Turf Conference and Show Committee and the Research Data Dispersal/Promotion Committee.

Kuhns chairs the PTC Membership and Turfgrass Endowment committees.

Meanwhile, PTC President Sam Snyder has appointed Dr. A.J. Turgeon to the Technical Advisory Committee. A member of the Department of Agronomy teaching turfgrass management at Penn State, Turgeon also serves as director of distance education in the College of Agricultural Sciences.



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Tony Jacklin is the winner of 14 PGA European Tour events (including the 1969 British Open) and 11 other international events (including the 1970 U.S. Open). Tony is also a four-time European Ryder Cup captain, and can be seen on the Senior PGA Tour.