

BRIEFS



**FTGA ELECTS BARNES PRESIDENT**

TAMPA, Fla. — David Barnes has been elected 1997-1998 president of the 1,200-member Florida Turfgrass Association (FTGA). Elected during the FTGA's 45th annual Conference & Show here, Barnes has more than 20 years experience in golf course turfgrass management. He is vice president and general manager of the Greg Norman Turf Co. in Avon Park. He has been a member of the FTGA since 1988, serving as vice president in 1996-1997. Barnes is also involved with the University of Florida IFAS.

**MIDWEST EXPO IN JANUARY**

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — The 1998 Midwest Turf Expo will be held Jan. 20-22 at the Indiana Convention Center here. A pre-Expo Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) seminar entitled "Design, Construction and Maintenance of Chemical Storage Facilities" will be held on Jan. 19. Registration and exhibitor information is available by calling Beverly Bratton at 765-494-8039.

**IMG INKS FOUR CONTRACTS**

LAKELAND, Fla. — International Golf Management has signed golf course maintenance contracts with The Blueberry Plantation Golf and Country Club in Alma, Ga., and with three golf facilities in Florida — Heritage Greens, Pelican Strand in Naples and Delray Country Club in Delray Beach. Heritage Greens is an 18-hole course scheduled to open in January. Pelican Strand is a semi-private 27-hole facility whose final nine holes will open in mid-January.

**FREE BALLS? YES ... AT THAYER CC**

THAYER, Mo. — No, that is not a misprint. Thayer Country Club has devised a plan to ease the "fall foliage frustration" that strikes golfers each autumn. You know: Great drive, down the middle, but unfindable because of tree leaves. Thayer's new policy won't find those lost balls for its golfers, but it gives them the chance to replace them. Using the honor system, golfers can just take the balls they lost that round from a collection of those found throughout the year by superintendent Tom Benyo. "I've never heard of a course replacing lost balls, but why not?" said Benyo. "After all, these balls came from the golfers. Let's give them back."

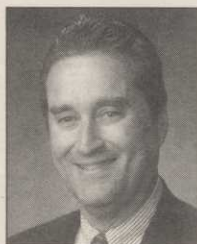


# Ohio show hits hot buttons

## President stresses green 'marriage'

By MARK LESLIE

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Calling the relationship of the state's golf course superintendents, sports turf managers and lawn-care operators "a beautiful marriage," new Ohio Turfgrass Foundation (OTF) President Joe Duncan said the different groups are learning more and more from each other as time passes.



Joe Duncan

"That relationship has existed for a long, long time, but we depend on each other more than ever before," said Duncan, owner of Evergreen Lawn Care Inc. in Troy, who succeeded Hank Chafin at the OTF Conference and Show here, Dec. 8-11. "We're learning that everything we do is an integral part of each other's work. Things that happen on sports turfs and on golf courses, and the research they are fostering, affect us all."

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## Prof. pushes more biological control

By MARK LESLIE

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Questions abound in the arena of turfgrass soil ecology and biology, but Dr. Michael Boehm pointed to a future where biological care plays an equal role in maintenance with chemical and cultural care and the turfgrass' genetic resistance.

The Ohio State University (OSU) assistant professor of plant pathology painted a picture in which current maintenance practices are dominated by chemicals, and where cultural practices and genetic resistance dwarf biological controls.

"We want to get all spheres relatively the same size to give turfgrass managers the ultimate and largest arsenal to combat turfgrass diseases," Boehm told an audience at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Show and Conference here.

"Our goal," he said, "is the integrated management of diseases ... to push the responsible use of biorational, environmentally friendly and environmentally

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Gathering data by GPS and GSI.

## Computer maps offer advantages for maintenance and construction

By KEVIN P. CORBLEY

LAKESWOOD, Colo. — Computerized mapping is the future of golf course maintenance and construction. That's the direction Larry Rodgers of Larry Rodgers Design here sees the industry taking. And his clients, some skeptical at first, tend to agree.

For more than a year, Rodgers has been using Global Positioning System (GPS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies to monitor and map the installation of irrigation systems his **1ST OF 3 PARTS** company

designs for new and existing courses. When each project is completed, Rodgers' clients not only have new irrigation, they are left with a digital map of the course they can use for many purposes.

"Digital mapping essentially replaces aerial photography in golf course mapping," explained Rodgers. "GPS and GIS are a lot more accurate and much less expensive in the long run than air photos."

Typically, an aerial photo of a course is taken after construction and has limited use as a map reference for some maintenance and future design changes. Digital mapping is conducted throughout the construction process, whether for a new course or a replacement irrigation system at an existing one. The digital map is created in layers as the project progresses and can be used to facilitate the construction itself.

"The bottom line is, this technology saves money by virtually eliminating change orders in renovations of existing courses," said Rodgers.

Digital maps give contractors an extremely accurate visual guide they can follow during construction. As a result, completed projects match very

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### GOLF AND THE ENVIRONMENT



A water sample is taken at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Conn.

## Tackling unreasonable expectations

By RON DODSON

It's interesting how jobs seem to define who we are. For instance, when we ask, "What is a golf course superintendent?" we're really asking what job does he or she do, and, believe me, everyone's got an answer about what they're supposed to do.

First of all, everyone seems to agree that a superintendent's primary job is to manage the golf course (meaning turfgrass). And it follows that every golfer has an opinion about how a golf course should be managed. They've played a lot of golf, they have a lawn, they have a lot of money, and they know how their greens ought to look and play. That makes them experts on how turfgrass ought to be managed. Right?

Sometimes that's how it sounds when I talk with golfers about superintendents.

Well, I'm here to tell you that good golf

course superintendents do a whole lot more than manage turfgrass. In addition to all of the work and expertise it takes to manage turf, they manage water, and from this environmentalist's perspective they also manage wildlife, wetlands, lakes, streams, forests, landscape ecology, insects, the weather, the media, the government, their staff, and the biggest challenge of all: the unreasonable expectations of golfers.

What do I mean by unreasonable? From an economic and environmental perspective, think about wall-to-wall manicured turfgrass, both in terms of man and machine hours as well as in loss of habitat. Think about fertilized turf right down to the edge of water bodies, both in terms of cost of fertilizers, man hours to spread it, and the potential damage to water quality

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## Killington Golf Club joins Audubon

KILLINGTON, Vt. — Killington Golf Course has joined the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System (ACSS), a national program designed to help landowners preserve and enhance the environmental quality of their property.

"It's a great program to make

people aware of the environment on the golf course," said superintendent Chris Voutas. "We're putting out bluebird and bat boxes and encouraging wildflower growth. We'll also cut down on water and pesticide usage."

The ACSS provides an advisory service to help golf courses develop effective conservation and wildlife enhancement programs.

## Unreasonable expectations of golfers

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for humans and animals alike.

How about greens cut so short for speed that the grass itself is nearly killed, and that if they actually lose a green, they lose their job. These are only a few of the dilemmas faced by superintendents every day — only a small balancing act.

We all need to face the fact

that the game of golf is designed and managed for golfers. They are the revenue and they want what they paid for. But the trends are changing.

Federal, state and local government agencies are increasingly regulating and permitting the construction of new courses, as well as making major impacts on the way existing courses are man-

aged. All golfers need to understand this. If they care about the game, particularly its future, they need to be much more reasonable in their expectations and much more supportive of superintendents who are trying very hard to deal with the conflicts arising from all those who have a stake in the game — golfers, governmental agencies, turfgrass, habitat, wildlife, and the environment at large.

On the other hand, people have told me that organizations such as AI, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and the U.S. Golf Association are not doing enough to promote superintendents as professional land managers. I can only speak on behalf of Audubon International in this regard.

AI is a not-for-profit environmental organization with a mission to improve the quality of life and the environment through research, education and conservation assistance. That's our job; it's what we do. We've always maintained that we'll work with anyone if it advances our mission to improve the environment.

What we're not in the business of doing is promoting anyone's job, including that of golf course superintendent. We do, however, publicly recognize anyone who demonstrates a commitment to protecting and enhancing the environment through their jobs. We recognize school teachers, farmers, corporate executives, homeowners and, of course, golf course superintendents.

As a matter of fact, Audubon International's highest environmental achievement award, The John James Audubon Environmental Steward Award, has only been given twice, and both times to golf course superintendents — Tim Hiers of Collier's Reserve and Peter Salinetti of Schuyler Meadow Club — not because of their job, but because as they perform that job, they have demonstrated their commitment to fundamental environmental principles.

At AI, our job is to provide the information, framework and opportunities to help people rise to the highest levels of environmental accomplishment. Although it is not our job to recognize golf course superintendents as a group, we can and will recognize superintendents who take up the mantle of managing their courses with the environment in mind.

This is, in fact, the challenge that we all must face in life. No one can do it for us. Audubon International will continue to publicly recognize those in the golf course industry who demonstrate environmental dedication in the construction and management of golf courses and we will continue to recognize superintendents who rise to the top of the profession in this regard.

We hope golfers, and others in the industry, will do the same.

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