

BRIEFS



TURF WEB '98 ANNOUNCED

TAMPA, Fla. — The Florida Turfgrass Association has announced the dates of Turf Web '98 Conference and Show. It will be held at the Tampa Convention Center, Sept. 16-19. Casino Night, an awards dinner, president's salute and other events are planned.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE NOMINATIONS

LAWRENCE, Kan. — The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) is accepting nominations for the 1999 Distinguished Service Award. Nominations are due by Sept. 1 on official forms, available from the association by calling 800-472-7878. The award is presented to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of the golf course superintendent's profession.



DELHI, NYSTA PARTNER

DELHI, N.Y. — The State University of New York — Delhi and the New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), in cooperation with chapters of the Golf Course Superintendents Association, will present a golf course seminar with emphasis on new technology on Aug. 4. Turfgrass and equipment manager sessions will be included. To obtain a conference brochure or for more information, people may call NYSTA at 800-873-8873, 518-783-1229; fax 518-783-1258, or write NYSTA, P.O. Box 612, Latham, N.Y. 12110.

PA. STUDENTS GIVEN ALTERNATIVE

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Penn State's two-year Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program has worked out an articulation agreement with Penn College of Technology which allows all graduates of the turf program to complete an associate degree. The agreement allows any certificate program graduate to continue studies at the Williamsport campus. By completing two semesters and required classes, the student would be awarded an associate degree in landscape technology with an emphasis in turfgrass management. People may contact Rich Weilminister at Penn College at 717-320-8038, or George Hamilton at Penn State at 814-865-3007.



Iowa golf/ag alliance influencing policy

By MARK LESLIE

DES MOINES, Iowa — Combining monetary clout with "a huge grassroots force," the Iowa Alliance of Environmental Concerns (IaAEC) and Agribusiness Association of Iowa (AAI) are proving that the turfgrass and agriculture industries can be a political power at the Statehouse here.

In this hot bed of agriculture, legislators have been known to cry "Uncle" when barraged by calls from IaAEC and AAI members, who hail



Members see group as model for others

from the moneyed agribusiness as well as the Iowa Golf Course Superintendents, Professional Lawn Care and Sod Producers associations and various other turf managers.

Efforts in various states around the country to affect legislation through lobbyists have been few and generally ineffective. Asked if the IaAEC-AAI

effort could serve as a model for the industry in other states, alliance Executive Secretary Mona Rae Bond replied simply: "Absolutely."

Fort Dodge Country Club superintendent Dennis Watters, the IaAEC president from 1995 to 1997, said: "I think you have to look at it on a state-by-state basis. We're in a hot bed of agriculture here."

In Iowa's case, he said, "We needed a vehicle to pull together everybody who had the same concerns: to ensure we

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GOLF AND THE ENVIRONMENT



Making choices: It's an environmental 'watershed'

By RON DODSON

Have you ever heard the reference to "watershed" as a critical point that changes a particular course of action, like a decision that created a turning point in history?

That use of watershed comes from its definition: "a ridge of high land dividing two areas that are drained by different river systems, also called 'water parting'." A watershed may also refer to the region that drains into a river, river system, or other body of water. So, the golf industry needs to take a look at watersheds for two reasons.

First, the industry needs to understand the environmental importance of watersheds in order to make good economic and environmental decisions about developing and managing the land.

Secondly, it has reached a critical point in making land-management decisions where it must choose between the status quo of golf course development and maintenance, and that of sustainable development and management practices

In order to understand how important watersheds are, however, we need to know a little about ecology. An ecosystem is a community (of plants, or animals, or even human beings) together with its environment of soils, waters and other elements on which the organisms depend for sur-

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N.C. State prof starts studies to help Asians

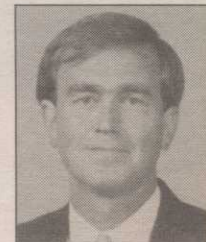
By MARK LESLIE

RALEIGH, N.C. — Citing the absence of scientific information on turfgrass pests in Asia, an American professor has undertaken what he hopes will be the first of many studies to help golf course superintendents in that region.

"If we can show some success with this research, on future projects I hope there will be people standing in line saying they will help," said Dr. Rick Brandenburg, a turf entomologist at North Carolina State University here. "The time commitment is actually very small."

The research is needed for many pests because what is known in the United States can not always be extrapolated for use in Asia, according to Brandenburg, who discovered this fact on a trip to Singapore this spring.

His pioneering program targets the number-one pest in many Asian countries: the mole cricket. Some 25 superintendents in Hong Kong, The Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, China and Indonesia are sending mole crickets from their courses to Brandenburg.



Rick Brandenburg

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Matchmaker, matchmaker

Two GCSAA ex-presidents team in jobs search firm



Bruce Williams



Jerry Faubel

By MARK LESLIE

LOS ANGELES — Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) Past President Bruce Williams has joined another former president, Jerry Faubel, adding a West Coast presence to Faubel's Executive Golf Search Inc.

Faubel first formed the "headhunting" company with famed course architect Robert Trent Jones Sr. and Michigan State University Prof. Ken Payne in the early 1990s. Payne died in 1994 and Jones has retired, leaving Faubel running the company solo.

"Over the years, I've been involved in helping a number of superintendents find jobs that would be a good fit for them," Williams said. "Retiring from the GCSAA board allowed me the opportunity to spend my spare time in other activities. This was the perfect match for me."

Saying that he and Payne had hoped Williams would join them after proceeding through the GCSAA chairs, Faubel added: "We thought Bruce would be an excellent partner. All of a sudden he moves [from Chicago] to the West Coast and

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Iowa alliance makes inroads at statehouse

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can keep using pesticides and fertilizers in the manner that law allows. Tying together the turf industry is one of our biggest accomplishments."

In the halls of the Legislature those accomplishments take on human proportions, affecting the everyday work life of IaAEC

and AAI members. In the just-completed session, for instance:

✓ Opposed by the alliance, the oil filter bill died. It would have required all oil filters in Iowa to be recycled.

✓ Opposed by the alliance, the Feed Lot Operations Bill failed as an attempt to allow

local governments to draft more-restrictive environmental protection laws than the state.

"There was language in that bill that regulates use of nitrogen," Bond said. "We wanted to be sure they didn't move into the commercial fertilizer field with their regulations, or if they did, that

it was something we could work with."

"We gave them a real good black eye in that bill," Watters said.

✓ Supported by the alliance, the Environmental Audit and Immunity Bill was passed. The bill encourages business owners to voluntarily conduct audits and submit their findings to the Department of Natural Resources. "In

exchange, they get privilege and immunity," Bond said. "If they have a problem, they have to develop a plan to take care of it. It's important to us as business owners that we do this voluntarily rather than it be regulated."

✓ Supported by the alliance, a drug-testing law passed. It allows private-sector employers to perform unannounced drug tests for all employees.

"We felt it was important, particularly if the employee is in a safety-sensitive position," Bond said.

The one bill the alliance lost on, she said, would have allowed an arbitration process when a seed farmer grows and sells a seed whose intellectual property rights are owned by a seed company.

From rallies at the Statehouse rotunda to phone calls to individual lawmakers, legislative dinners and Bond's one-on-one lobbying, the alliance is deeply involved in the Statehouse operations from its opening, the second week in January, to its closing, May 23. And Bond mails out bi-weekly updates to members, this year tracking 60 bills.

"We aren't anti-everything," said Watters. "We are concerned about the environment as much as anybody else. We just want to make sure both sides are heard."

"We feel strongly that we can address the issues from a scientific standpoint. They [opponents] throw around figures that are not fact. We are basing what we say and do on fact."

"Not all regulations are bad," said Bond. "Most are designed for protection of the public and the workers who use the product. Our goal is to make sure they don't go overboard."

She gave, as an example, a bill once submitted that would have mandated that all lawn-spray posters be printed in Spanish and English. The bill sponsor's district included a packing plant employing a number of Hispanics, but Hispanics and other aliens account for less than 2 percent of Iowa's population.

"We have universal signs that warn 'No Pets,' or 'No People.' It was a business cost that went beyond the needs of the public," Bond said. "Of course, that wouldn't be the case if we were in California because of the diversity of the population there."

Started in 1990 out of the continuing battle over "home rule" pre-emption in environmental regulations, IaAEC has gained a strong foothold in the corridors of the state capitol,

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Iowa Alliance of Environmental Concerns urges, 'Avoid our mistakes'

By MARK LESLIE

DES MOINES, Iowa — Agriculture and turfgrass industries in other states, perhaps less potent than here, could learn from Iowa's mistakes as well as its success, said Mona Bond, executive secretary of the Iowa Alliance of Environmental Concerns (IaAEC).

• IaAEC gained a crucial boost to its momentum last fall when the Iowa golf course superintendents' and lawn-care professionals' associations both voted to donate a portion of each member's dues to the alliance. This made each association member also a member of the IaAEC.

"That's big kudos," Watters said. "We went from 30 golf courses that would donate \$65 every year to having 350 to 400 members just from the golf course side."

• "In an ideal world, you would go to the horticulture industry and bring in at least all the commercial entities under one umbrella because of the commonality on the two issues [pesticide and fertilizer use]," Bond said. "In Iowa perhaps the groundwork wasn't done well enough. That was their intent. But with personalities, etc., it didn't work. Now we work for the turf industry and in coalition with fruit and vegetable growers and others in the horticulture industry. If we have a long-term goal, it would be to unite those industries and have two lobbyists instead of one... It's tough to have a personal relationship with 150 legislators."

• The pest-control association does not belong to IaAEC, although the large manufacturers are members, individually, of the alliance.

• Watters noted that "there can be some hostility between the horticulture and agriculture sectors because the ag sector is monitored more by the federal government and we're monitored more by the state. From time to time that can be frustrating, to say the least."

• But, as it operates, the alli-

ance does not get involved in issues on which member groups don't all agree.

"Each of the groups can determine a specific agenda," Bond said. "For three or four years, when we wanted state regulation of pesticides and fertilizers, that was the number-one priority of the group. If, for instance,

'If we have a long-term goal, it would be to unite those [turf and horticulture] industries and have two lobbyists instead of one...'

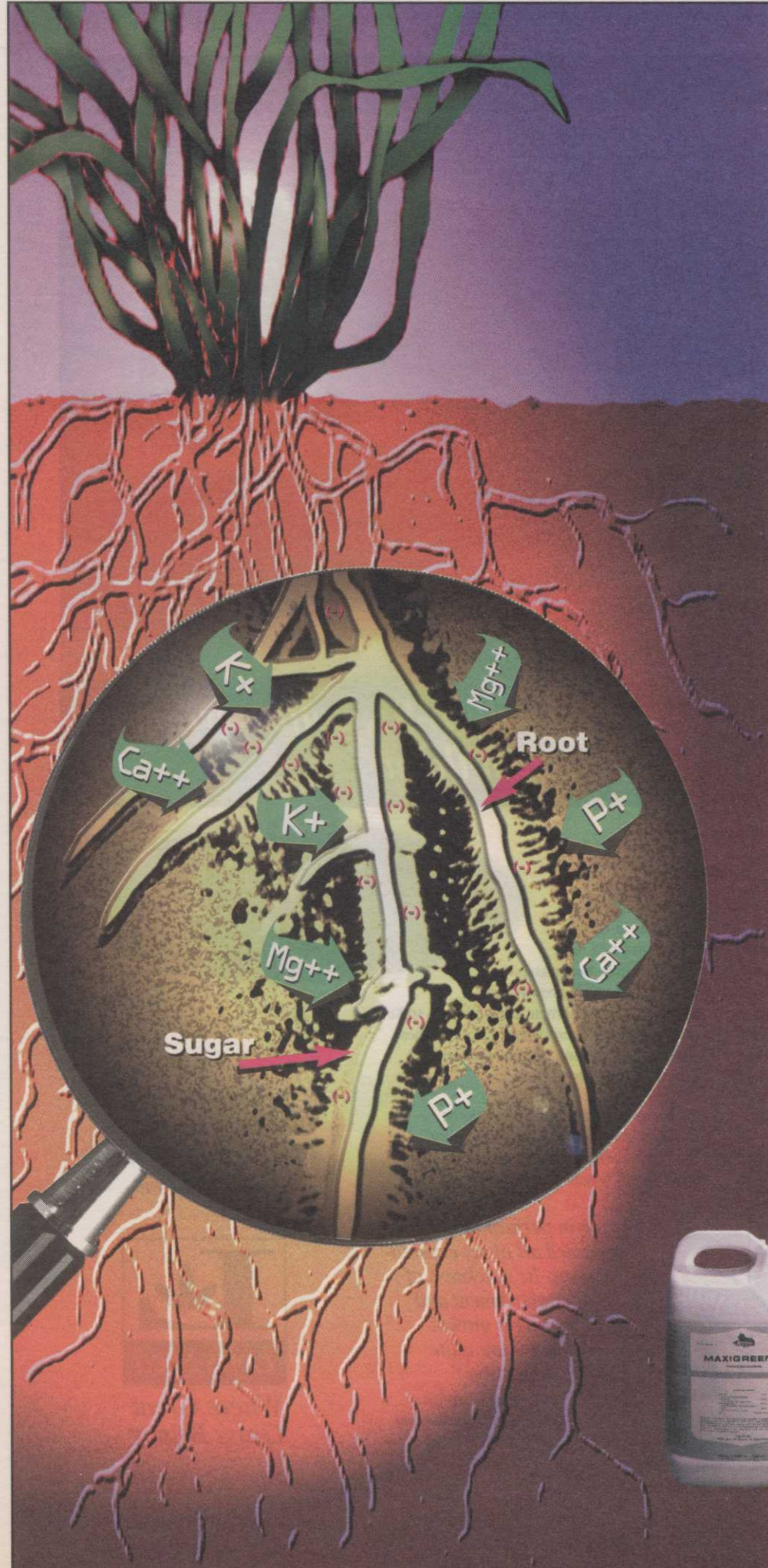
— Mona Bond

the superintendents have an issue they want that is not in conflict with other members, the alliance will lobby that issue."

Bond sends members material every week or two "so we know what's happening and if we need to contact our legislators," said Watters. "She'll let us know and tell us what points we have to hit.

I'm sure everyone in the country will face the same battles. And I think we [in Iowa] will fight the same battles in 10 years that we fight now. We will be fighting home rule, for instance.

"But the more you're informed on what your legislators are doing, the less likely someone will dump a new law on you."



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Iowan alliance

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according to Watters. "When we call, they can put a name to a group," he said.

Bond recalled the alliance's impact on the home rule debate.

"When you tie together the alliance's 537 members and 1,700 agribusiness members, it becomes a grassroots ground swell," she said. "Legislators told us, 'Please don't get your members to call us again. We get the point.' It made a huge difference."