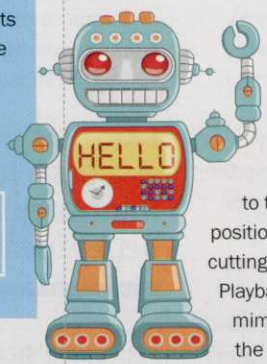
From
THE FEED

Were you a part of the GCI Tweetup and Social Media awards at last year's Golf Course Industry show? We're making social media really social again this year – but inside, this time. Aquatrols has partnered up with our team to bring the event to the show floor and give Pat Jones another reason to wield his megaphone. Meet up at the Aquatrols booth (#2231) on Wednesday, Feb. 6, at 3:30 p.m. to join the conversation. We'll announce this year's recipients of the Social Media awards and talk about even more turf than we already do online, plus enjoy some cold beverages and music. Use the #GCITweetUp13 tag on Twitter to let us know you're joining in!

Join the conversation on Twitter @GCIMagazine!

ROBOMOWER IS COMING

IF THERE'S an empty mower cutting its way through the fairway, don't assume it's a runaway. It could be a mower equipped with the Probotiq control system, turning an ordinary mower into a self-driving mowing machine.



The control system is just a few parts, including an armrest terminal, a GPS antenna for the rollbar and front and back safety sensors to make sure nothing can stop the mower – well, except anything it's not supposed to mow over. When a crew member rides a mower with Probotiq installed, he can use the Teach mode to train it to store information about the mower's position, driving speed, steering angle and lifting the cutting units. When the run is complete, using the Playback mode later will let the robo-enhanced mower mimic the mowing session from earlier after driving the mower to the starting position.

If the crew's still afraid the mower will go rogue, there's a wireless remote control, plus internal system and engine monitoring and obstacle detection sensors. If something does trip the sensors or it detects something unsafe, the mower will come to a stop and send a text to your cell phone.

We're still waiting for the build that comes equipped with lasers, ourselves.

Michigan Turfgrass grows

The Michigan State University turf diagnostics lab will expand soon, thanks to a $100,000 donation made by Michigan turfgrass alum, superintendent and former assistant national director for the USGA, Carl Schwartzkopf, along with the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation.

The new lab will make it easier to make more precise studies of turf with some brand new equipment at the Hancock Turfgrass Research Scenario, and will add a molecular biologist to the facility.

"It's just amazing to me that we're able to be at a facility that Carl had a part in building back in the 60s," says Gordie LaFontaine, executive director of the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation.

Schwartzkopf made the official donation December 7, when MTF and GCSAA members and faculty were there for a ribbon cutting and dedication of the new lab.

Watch Schwartzkopf donate $100,000 to Michigan State University's turf diagnostics lab at bit.ly/GCI100k.