

# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### Michaud resigns from Pebble

One month before the 2000 AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am and about six months before the U.S. Open, Mark Michaud resigned as superintendent of Pebble Beach Golf Links.

Michaud was at Pebble Beach for seven years and was reported to be looking for work on the East Coast.

### Deere sues Toro

Moline, Ill.-based Deere & Co. is suing Bloomington, Minn.-based Toro Co. for allegedly infringing a patent for a turf cultivating machine. Deere claims that Toro and a distributor are illegally manufacturing and marketing aerators that use Deere's technology.

A Toro spokesman denied its competitor's allegation.

"We honor others patents and aggressively pursue our own," the spokesman told *Golfdom*. "As this suit goes forward, we're confident that Toro will prevail."

### Toro rebounds in '99

Toro Co. reported that results for the year ending Oct. 31 rebounded over last year and are in line with expectations. Momentum from fiscal 1999 is expected to carry over into this year, the company said.

Net sales for the year were \$1.27 billion, compared to \$1.11 billion in 1998, an increase of 14.8 percent. Net income after restructuring and other unusual expenses was \$35.1 million compared to \$4.1 million in 1998.

"Toro rebounded solidly in fiscal 1999 with strong performances from our professional and residential business segments," said Kendrick B. Melrose, chairman and CEO.

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## Mona at Six

### HOW DOES GCSAA'S CEO EAT AN ELEPHANT? ONE BITE AT A TIME.

*Editor's note: Publisher/Editor Pat Jones recently chatted with his former boss, GCSAA CEO Steve Mona. Jones, a former GCSAA director of public affairs, calls Mona "one of the best leaders I've ever known" and "the right person in the right job at the right time."*

#### 1. Does it really seem possible that you've been CEO of the association for six years? Has time flown or crawled?



The time has absolutely flown by. It doesn't feel at all like six years. That's because I thoroughly enjoy what I'm doing, and anytime that's the case, time is secondary. Secondly, the challenges we've had have been absorbing. Your sense of time disappears.

#### 2. What were the big challenges you and your new team faced at the time?

The biggest thing was building trust. There were three dimensions to that challenge. First, building trust between the membership and the "administration." We were new, unknown quantities and the organization had been through a lot. Second, we had to build trust between staff and the executive leadership. Nobody knew each other, and there was

a lot of history. Finally, we had to establish trust between GCSAA and the other golf associations. The association had been pretty isolated within golf for a number of years.

#### 3. What should the average member who hasn't visited the Lawrence headquarters know about the GCSAA staff that he or she probably wouldn't realize?

First, it's a dedicated group of people. Not all of our staff are golfers and they're certainly not superintendents, but they just seem to have an innate desire to do right by the members. They take on the challenges that our members face and they take them very personally.

Secondly, they would find a phenomenally well-educated group. My bachelor's degree sometimes makes me feel a little intimidated by comparison (to other staffers).

Finally, they are people that get the big picture and understand how their jobs relate to it. They're not working in a vacuum.

#### 4. Of which accomplishments are you most proud over the past five years?

The biggest is increased recognition and respect for the individual superintendent. I can't say that any one specific thing has led to that or how much of it we can take credit for — and I really don't care. But it's irrefutable that we've made gains.

Second, there has been a large increase in the recognition and credi-

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# Garden Variety

## L.A. CC'S HORTICULTURIST SPORTS GREEN THUMB

If you can't find Russell Watanabe on the golf course, he's probably in the garden growing vegetables. That's one of Watanabe's many duties as horticulturist at Los Angeles CC.

Watanabe, who reports to superintendent Bruce Williams, is also in charge of maintaining the clubhouse's landscape, cleaning the parking lot, growing indoor plants, planting annuals such as flowers on the grounds and providing floral arrangements for clubhouse tables.

"We have an extensive operation here for clubhouse grounds," says Watanabe, a California native who also helps care for the course's trees and shrubs.

Watanabe's most unusual duty is to grow herbs and vegetables for clubhouse chef Christian Reber, who serves them the country club's restaurant. Reber favors unusual lettuce types and heirloom tomatoes, and Watanabe will grow several organic varieties at a time.



Russell Watanabe grow herbs and vegetables for the restaurant at the Los Angeles CC.

"Sometimes I'll mix the lettuce seed, and it will come out mixed greens," Watanabe says.

Watanabe keeps a stock of rosemary, sage, bay leaf and lemon grass in the herb garden. Cooks will forage the garden to gather what they need for a day's meals.

Watanabe also planted fruit trees — peaches, figs, guavas and bananas — at Reber's request. He grows indoor plants for the clubhouse that are used in boxes for room dividers and decoration.

# Quotable



**"We had one Port-O-Pot for every keg of beer sold."**

— Paul Jett, Pinehurst #2 superintendent, on vital preparations for the U.S. Open last summer.

**"The transition zone is where superintendents transition from job to job as a result of turf losses."**

— John C. Robinson, superintendent of Bayville GC in Virginia Beach, Va., describing how difficult it is to grow grass in his corner of the world.

**"As architects, we're going to have to quit designing courses to impress other architects."**

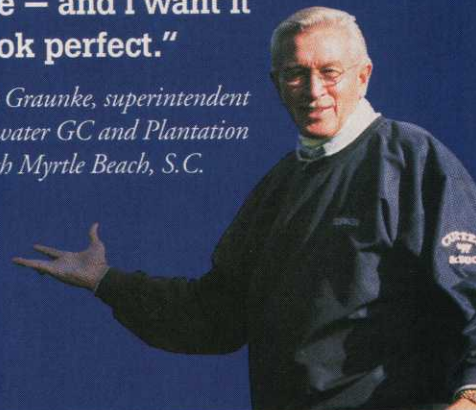
— John LaFoy, president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects

**"Don't Let the Messenger They Shoot Be You"**

— Title of a seminar hosted by Mike Jousan of the South Dakota GCSA, to be held in March

**"My philosophy has always been that when you come to my golf course, you're coming to my home — and I want it to look perfect."**

— Bob Graunke, superintendent of Tidewater GC and Plantation in North Myrtle Beach, S.C.



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### 'Links for Life' debuts

*Golf Digest* and the American Heart Association are starting a public awareness campaign called Links for Life to improve survival from cardiac emergencies on golf courses and in other public places. It encourages golf courses to strengthen their emergency response programs and will help educate golfers about what they can do when a cardiac emergency strikes.

Golf courses are among the most common public places for cardiac arrests. They are also among the most difficult for emergency medical providers to reach quickly. The first phase of Links for Life is a call to North America's 16,000 golf courses to add automated external defibrillators and train staff members to use the life-saving devices.

For more information on Links for Life, call the American Heart Association at 214-706-1665.

### Zeneca teams with chemistry firm

Wilmington, Del.-based Cambridge Discovery Chemistry will take over responsibility for Zeneca Agrochemicals' chemistry research facility within Zeneca's R&D Center in Richmond, Calif., the two companies announced in December.

"The collaboration offers us the opportunity to combine world-class combinatorial chemistry expertise in a flexible research arrangement which will greatly benefit both our businesses," said David Evans, Zeneca's director of R&D.

Zeneca Agrochemicals is part of AstraZeneca PLC, which plans to merge with Novartis AG to form Syngenta. The deal is expected to be finalized later this year.

### Sanctuary gains Audubon status

Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Sanctuary GC at Westworld recently received certification from the Audubon International Institute as Arizona's first Signature Status Golf Course.

The goal of Audubon's program is to merge wildlife conservation, habitat enhancement and environmental improvement with the economic agenda associated with land development.

# Over 50 And Rocking

**W**e asked 58-year-old Gary Grigg, a recipient of GCSAA's Distinguished Service Award for 2000, what it's like to be a successful superintendent over 50. Grigg is CGCS of Royal Poinciana GC in Naples, Fla.

### On the job market:

I realize statistics reveal there are few active Class A superintendents over 50. There are several reasons for that — one is money. As you progress in the industry, the experience you gain becomes more valuable, and you expect to become well-compensated for it. A few clubs are willing to compensate for experience and a proven track record, and these clubs hire the best of the older superintendents. However, many clubs seem interested in hiring younger, up-and-coming superintendents for less money. I can't fault the clubs for wanting to save dollars. They may get a great talent — and they may not. The bottom line: Past performance is a good indication of future performance.

I also believe there are fewer superintendents over 50 because many of them tire of the grind. Today's golfers demand ever-increasing perfection on the courses they play, and the business is getting more complex as we strive to reach that perfection. If you're not willing to continue your education, you can fall behind in a hurry.



### On continued personal growth:

When you cease to learn new things, you stop growing as a person. I continue to challenge myself both in and out of golf. I have spent my career trying to stay on the cutting edge of technology in our business. Along the way, I raised four children, earned a pilot's license, got my SCUBA license and learned to speak a few foreign languages, although not as well as I would like.

### On the need to know:

Golf course maintenance is an ever-changing business and our management practices change from time to time. The newer superintendents coming out

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## Knowing the score

Certified superintendent salaries average 27 percent higher than salaries of superintendents who are not certified.

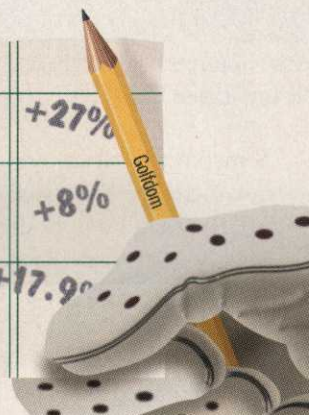
+27%

From 1995 to 1998, salaries for golf course superintendents increased 8 percent from \$49,269 to \$53,205

+8%

CGCS with more than 20 years of experience commanded the most significant average salary increase at 17.9 percent, from \$56,618 in 1995 to \$66,774 in 1998.

+17.9%



SOURCE: GCSAA, 1999; ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEDY

### Coming Up Aces

Holes in one are not easy to make, so imagine the surprise of golfers at the Tommy Hilfiger Pro-Am in Las Vegas last November when not one, not two but *three* holes in one were shot in the course of the tournament on the same hole — two of them coming back-to-back.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Joe Dahlstrom, head golf professional at Royal Links GC, which hosted the tournament. "A single hole in one is rare enough, but three on the same day and two back-to-back is unheard of. If I hadn't been there, I wouldn't have believed it."

The 8th hole, designed to mimic the famed Postage Stamp hole at Royal Troon in Scotland, yielded the three aces to Scott Hatch of Stratham, N.H., as well as Arthur D'Allesandro Jr. and Jimmy Dee of Marshfield, Mass., back-to-back.

Let's hope the lucky golfers treated their friends at the gaming tables that night.

### Over 50

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of good universities have learned the latest technologies.

They have an edge over us unless we're willing to spend time to keep up with the latest practices. It's not all about agronomics anymore. Clubs want strong business-oriented superintendents and good communicators. Those who work hard at learning the best new ways to maintain a course and train quality crews will succeed.

#### On the need to stay fit:

You should watch your health as you mature. I was once overweight and to the point where if I saw exercise coming, I would lie down until it passed. But I lost 50 pounds last year by eating a healthy, balanced diet combined with several hours of weekly aerobic exercise and weight training. I feel better than I have for years.

## Watch Your Gas

### THINK ABOUT HOW YOU POUR AND STORE

Did you know a typical gasoline can emits nearly 8 pounds of hydrocarbons through spills and evaporation each year? (Trust us, hydrocarbons are bad.) Compare this to a new car, and a portable fuel container emits twice the amount of hydrocarbons that a car does annually.

Charlotte, N.C.-based Husqvarna Forest & Garden Co. recently signed on with the newly created Alliance for Proper Gasoline Handling, to promote improved environmental, health and safety. Husky and the Alliance offers the following common-sense tips:

#### Use proper containers

- Use approved gasoline storage containers with a proper spout for pouring.
- Keep the container tightly sealed and out of direct sunlight.
- Always open and use containers in a well-ventilated area.

#### Store carefully

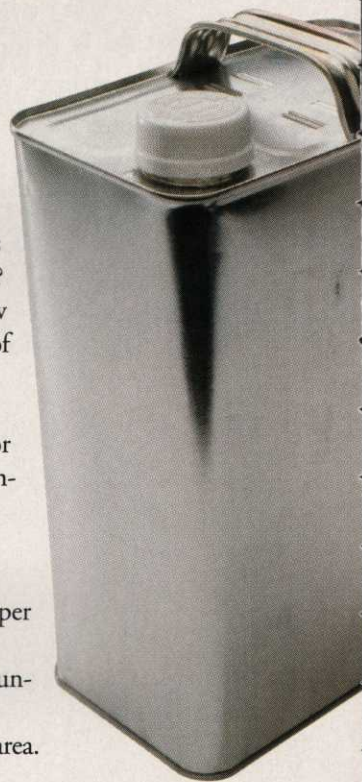
- Store no more than 10 gallons.
- Store gasoline in a cool, dry place.
- Buy and use fuel in the season purchased.
- Store at ground level, not on a shelf to minimize the danger of spilling.
- Store and use far away from drinking water wells. Gasoline moves quickly through soil and into groundwater.

#### Fill cautiously

- Always use a funnel and/or spout to prevent spilling or splashing.
- Always refuel outside where there is adequate ventilation to disperse vapors.
- Refuel on concrete or asphalt rather than on soil or near water.

#### Avoid spills/Dispose properly

- If a spill occurs, use kitty litter, saw dust or an absorbent towel to soak up the spill, then dispose of it properly.
- Never dispose of gasoline down the drain, into surface water, onto the ground or into the trash.



## The Smell of Victory

A shout of approval for U.S. Micro-bics, a California company that has successfully taken the stink out of horse dung.

The company announced recently that its patented Bio-Raptor process and proprietary microbial mixtures have "successfully reduced offensive odors, pathogens, and seeds from horse manure and turned the organic matter into a high quality soil amendment for landscape and architectural projects."

The Bio-Raptor is a shredder, conveyor and screening system for solid manure applications. The one-step process pulverizes, aerates and sprays the manure with a microbial blend. Recent tests with horse manure have shown impressive results, including odor reduction within three days, pathogen and seed reduction within seven days, volume reduction up to 45 percent and ammonium reduction of 95 percent, according to the company.

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bility of GCSAA itself. The only reason that's important is that if the organization has a good reputation within the golf community, our members benefit from it.

Finally, I'm proud of the establishment of a strong corporate culture here in Lawrence. In my mind, it's a culture of service.

## 5. What's your wish list for the next five years?

There are two overarching goals for between now and 2005. First, we want for the superintendent to be viewed as the key to the economic vitality of the

facility and the enjoyment of the game. Much of what we're doing supports that. The Professional Development Initiative is part of that. Our public relations program is part of that.

Second, we want the GCSAA to be viewed as one of golf's leading organizations in terms of importance to and influence on the game. We've made a conscious decision to move from being a golf course maintenance organization to a golf organization that has, at its heart, golf course maintenance.

There's an old saying that, "The rising tide raises all boats." If GCSAA as an organization has high credibility,

our members can go along for that ride. If a member can be viewed like a PGA member is today, then we've made it.

## 6. You're one of the best time managers I've ever met. What tips would you give to readers on making the most of every day?

I plan a week at a time. On Friday, I'll plan my whole next week's schedule. I know what I want to accomplish. From there, I take my daily schedule and break it into 30-minute segments. Then I put down specific and achievable items I want to accomplish in that 30 minutes. It's like the old saying, "How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time."

One little trick: I try to do one more thing than my schedule dictates — sign one more letter or whatever. It adds up over the course of the week.

## 7. Who inspires you?

On a general level, I'm inspired by the person with the big heart and not as much talent. The person with the positive attitude who really is out to make things better. Woody Allen said 80 percent of success is showing up. I like those people, too.

## 8. Do you still maintain and update a "written plan" for your life and career? If so, what's next after a long and successful tenure at GCSAA?

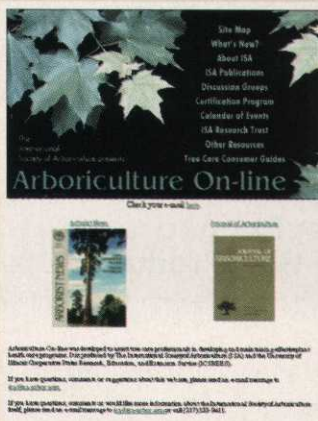
It (the plan) is a little looser today than it once was. Not because I'm any less interested in my career, but my goals right now are all about my children (two boys, 19 and 16, and a daughter, 13). All my focus is there. That's what I'm about when I'm not at the office.

I don't think much about my professional plan anymore because I'm enjoying myself so much here. It seems like the more you accomplish, the more you see there is to accomplish. It's a never-ending challenge. I want to continue to serve the game of golf and stay in association management. Then I think I'll be pretty happy.

## Scanning the Web

When I play golf, I find myself in the trees far more often than I'd like, so I have a lot of time to wonder how superintendents keep them all healthy. Here are a few sites that will help us all figure that out (all sites start with <http://> unless otherwise noted):

\*\*\*\*\* — Bookmark it and return frequently; \* — Look at only if absolutely necessary



\*\*\*\*\*[www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com) — The official site of the International Society of Arboriculture provides both technical and general information about taking care of trees. Not only is it full of information, but it's easily navigable as well. It contains archived material from the *Journal of Arboriculture* and *Arborist News*, as well as discussion groups. This site is a great resource for all tree care information, but I have one quibble: The archives for the *Journal* only contain abstracts and don't give visitors any idea of how to get the full articles.

\*\*\*\*[www.natlarb.com](http://www.natlarb.com) — The National Arborist Association breaks its site into clear, targeted sections: consumers, professionals and general industry information. It has a click-through format that makes it easy to find what you're looking for, and there's plenty of information here. If you need to find an arborist in your area, this site has a search engine to help you.

\*\*[www.timbertree.com](http://www.timbertree.com) — This Stuart, Fla.-based tree care company will help you get basic information on tree care. It's a good site for beginners because it's thorough. It covers different stages of tree development, from the original planting through transplanting and offers tips on long-term care as well. It should answer the simplest tree-care questions.

*Scanning the Web is compiled by Frank H. Andorka Jr., Golfdom's associate editor, who ducks each time he tries to hit a pitching wedge from behind a 60-foot oak. You may reach him at [fandorka@advanstar.com](mailto:fandorka@advanstar.com) with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.*