

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

GCSAA restarts moving study

The GCSAA has restarted its headquarters relocation study. But there will be a change in the process, said certified superintendent Jon D. Maddern, GCSAA's president.

The study will be based on the same model that was used in recent years to study and implement the Chapter Affiliation Agreement and the Professional Development Initiative. As part of this process, an independent resource group composed of GCSAA members has been created to study all relevant issues regarding relocation. The Headquarters Location Resource Group will have administrative support and operate under broad oversight, but will have appropriate autonomy with which to act, the association said in a news release.

The relocation study was put on "pause" in February.

Bayer off to good start

The Bayer Group is off to a good start in 2003, spurred by its acquisition of Aventis CropScience. Bayer said continuing operations improved by 31 percent in the first quarter. Sales of Bayer CropScience jumped by 92 percent, mainly due to the Aventis CropScience acquisition.

In other company news, Bayer Environmental Science announced the company can continue to market the active ingredient fipronil and its mixtures to the turf and ornamental market. The announcement stems from Bayer CropScience AG's recent agreement on the divestiture of selected insecticides and fungicides to BASF AG.

Bayer says it retains back-licenses for certain nonagricultural applications. Fipronil serves as the active ingredient for Chipco TopChoice and Chipco Choice. Chipco

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Power Play

EYEWIRE

AN ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM COULD LOWER CHARGING COSTS FOR YOUR GOLF CAR FLEET

By Scott Austin

If you're like most general managers, superintendents and golf club executives, you do two things every month when your electrical bill arrives. You take one look at it and mutter something about the *x*b%cc&ing!* power company. Then you do one more thing — you pay the bill.

You don't have to, you know. Well, unless you want your local power company to pull the plug on your club, you *do* have to pay your power bills. But you don't have to resign yourself to ever-increasing costs for electricity. You can lower your power bill significantly by investing in a system to manage and control charging costs for your fleet of electric golf cars.

While most clubs carefully scrutinize their costs for labor, food and beverage and equipment, electricity costs are often overlooked even though they can claim 25 percent to 35 percent of operating expense budgets. But in today's environment — with fuel costs going up and increasing deregulation of the power companies — it makes sense to have an energy management strategy that's more proactive than the common "we'll try to use less" approach.

Energy management systems have been around for almost two decades.

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Choice is used by Southern superintendents for long term mole cricket control.

Scotts resubmits application

With another year of field study now under its belt, The Scotts Co. has resubmitted its request for government approval of its Round-Up Ready creeping bentgrass. The company had withdrawn its application for approval last fall after the USDA asked for an additional growing season's worth of data on the herbicide-resistant species.

Originally, the company hoped to have seed available commercially in 2004 or 2005, but Scotts spokesman Wayne Horman said the company "really isn't looking at any specific timeline right now" to come to market.

Deere supplying EAGL

John Deere was named the exclusive supplier of golf course maintenance equipment and financing to Evergreen Alliance Golf Limited (EAGL), a golf course management company serving more than 40 courses around the country. Through the agreement, John Deere Golf & Turf One Source will be supplying golf and turf maintenance equipment to the superintendents of each EAGL course, including all mowing, aeration and specialty turf products. John Deere will also provide exclusive financing to the courses.

RISE launches site on West Nile

RISE has launched a new Web site — www.westnilevirusfacts.org — on West Nile virus and how pesticides are an important preventative tool. West Nile virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito and can infect people, horses, many types of birds and some other animals. The virus spread rapidly South and West throughout 2002. Many experts believe that in West Nile virus will make its way across the entire country this year.

Web site focuses on water issues

The University of Georgia turfgrass team has introduced the Web site, www.turfgrassWater.com, to disseminate information related to turfgrass water issues. The team consists of scientists in the forefront of water conservation, and water-quality research and outreach.

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But the most advanced systems on the market today are a far cry from the ones introduced by the power companies themselves in the mid 1980s to manage irrigation systems. Internal computers, user-friendly displays and comprehensive backup features now bring new management and control capabilities to course operations.

The basic job of any energy management system is to switch the charging function from a manual task to an automated one, using today's advanced technology to realize a cost savings. It sounds simple enough, and it is. But before you invest in a system, it's a good idea to get an analysis of your facility's electrical usage from the system's manufacturer, which will be able to explain the system in detail and tell you what you should expect in the way of savings.

The basis for any energy management system is that it allows clubs to recharge their electric car fleets during many local power companies' less-expensive off-peak times. These times are more commonly known as Time Of Use (TOU) or Time Of Day (TOD) rates. They were introduced by utility

companies as an incentive for customers to shift their charging load to times when public demand is lower. Depending on where your course is located, these reduced rates are usually in effect from around 8 p.m. until 8 a.m. The system can be programmed to switch itself on when the off peak-rates begin and off when the standard rate takes effect.

A quality energy management system should be specifically designed for golf car charging to automate all

electrical control tasks. It should be totally hands-free, and adjust automatically to seasonal and time changes. Choose a model that can also be programmed to phase-in a charging system to help eliminate overload problems. Also inquire about a program that includes surge protection, lightning safety, and golf car storage facility design and planning. A top-of-the-line system offers this and more.

In most cases, energy management systems save clubs 10 percent to 60 percent on their charging costs. Clubs with a fleet of 70 cars, for example, could expect an average savings of around \$500 per month, or \$6,000 per year.

Coincidentally, that's about what the system is going to cost on the front end. In addition to the hardware and software, installation labor costs are about \$500 for a new facility to \$2,500 to retrofit an existing facility. The equipment has a life cycle of about 20 years.

One way to look at the benefit is to think of it in terms of adding 10 more golf cars to the fleet for an entire year at no cost.

Energy management systems designed specifically for your golf car fleet not only combat rising costs, but also pay for themselves at the same time. One of the biggest residual benefits is that when you're saving on electricity you're not reducing services or quality in the eyes of your members. You're simply helping your club operate more efficiently, which is something everyone appreciates these days.

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Scott Austin is energy management specialist for Augusta, Ga.-based Club Car.

Off The Fringe

How Long Have You Been in the Industry?

IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME IF YOU REMEMBER
WHEN THE PALM SPRINGS DESERT WAS DESERTED

By Craig F. Zellers

You know you've been in the golf industry too long if you remember when:

■ Rollers were something your wife wore in her hair at night.



■ The golf pro actually gave lessons.

■ There were no DOGs – that is, directors of golf.

■ You were mad at the producers of the movie *Caddyshack*.

■ Microfeeding was a lousy little meal you got in the food line during the Great Depression.

■ The GCSAA "chat room" was a rented hotel at the national conference where everyone chewed the fat.

■ You and the rest of the superintendents wore brown polyester leisure suits to the annual meeting.

■ You were around to watch the contractor install asbestos or galvanized irrigation lines.

■ "Lightweight" mowers meant a mower that just couldn't handle the job.

■ You planted the seedlings that are now the 80-foot tree that is being removed from near the green.

■ "Slow release" meant that it took a long time to get out of jail.

■ Sales representatives didn't have cell phones and beepers.

■ You used to lie awake at night and wonder if the night waterman made it to work.

■ You used to lie awake at night and wonder if the night waterman was sleeping.

■ Eisenhower was "the golfing president"

■ The Palm Springs desert was deserted.

■ Growth regulator was an experimental

drug that first failed when given to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

■ You can't specifically remember when the young superintendents started calling you "sir."

■ You were the first to discover where to get the cool carrying bags at the national show.

■ You had "greenkeeper" printed on your business card.

■ Seaside bentgrass was the really hot turf for greens.

■ You remember when Payne Stewart wasn't the only one who wore knickers.

■ Horsepower was really horse-powered.

■ You thought chicken manure as a fertilizer smelled good.

■ You used to handle mercury without protective clothing.

■ You knew what mercury was.

■ You used to get quotes over the phone (where else would you get them?).

■ Shotgun tournaments were started with real shotguns.

■ "American Golf" was something that foreign tourists really looked forward to.

■ The times you told your caddy to bring you the niblick or mashie.

■ You watched Ben Hogan win at Riviera CC.

■ And lastly, you know you've been around too long if you remember being at the first superintendents' convention in Chicago. Heck, you've been around too long if you went to any of the conventions in Chicago.

Craig F. Zellers is a Toro irrigation sales representative for Turf Star Distribution. He was previously a certified superintendent for nine years.



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Work as Art

TEACH EMPLOYEES TO FIND
THEIR CREATIVE SIDES

By Luke Wagner

Motivating others to their full potential can be one of the most complicated tasks handed to anyone in a position of authority. My advice for superintendents: Consider yourselves lucky. You have more motivating opportunities in one day than an assembly-line foreman gets in a decade.

The idea of why my coworkers and I were motivated to do our best job on the golf course came to me during the time in my life I was enrolled in a creative writing workshop and working on the golf course simultaneously. I noticed I was looking at my artwork in school much the same way as my daily tasks of walk-mowing greens, striping fairways and other maintenance practices. I found both responsibilities were something I looked back on after finishing and could appreciate.

While every human being doesn't have a creative side, or wish to openly admit it, I believe most people do. For that majority of us that do, a superintendent must look no further than to generate a creative outlet in their assignments. If a manager is fortunate enough to have a job where this is possible, such as golf course maintenance, there are four key elements to explore: stimulation, supervision, satisfaction and appreciation.

By stimulation I mean getting employees to realize what they're doing, whether it be weed eating or mowing tees, will lead to an artistic benefit for themselves or an appreciative benefit to others. For example, friendly competition was an effective stimulant for some of my coworkers and me. A group of us walk-mowed greens every morning for about a year, and our boss encouraged competition. The competition, while trivial, was to see who could make the straightest lines with the fewest skips and least overlap.



ARTVILLE

By being encouraged to look over our jobs after we were finished, this stimulated the artistic and critical portions of our minds. We ended up being three of the most talented greens-mowers I saw in my six years. This was also an advantage to those we trained later on.

If friendly competition is the route a superintendent decides to go, supervision is the second element that must be mastered. I compare a lack of supervision to removing the referee from a football game. Chaos is bound to ensue. As an authority figure, a manager must be aware of what's going on and what is right in order to move forward to satisfaction.

The satisfaction element, which includes dissatisfaction, is a two-way street. An employer and an employee must have a goal in mind to be satisfied or dissatisfied. For example, if a long-term goal for an employee is to burn a checkerboard pattern into the zoysia fairways on the par 4s, the point of satisfaction needs to be clear. Once the job is done, though, it's important the employee has some reason to repeat the performance. The appreciation element comes last and is where the artistic outlet really begins to materialize.

Like satisfaction, there are two kinds of appreciation — employee and manager. In order to simulate an appreciation in an employee, the manager must show an appreciation himself. Nothing tells an employee more that he or she is appreciated as when the manager tells the employee verbally. This takes on the same principles as an artistic workshop. If an educated veteran (professor or superintendent) says a piece of work is worth appreciating, it's much easier for the artist to grow. This is the connection, subconsciously, I was making between school and work. A golf course employee can be visually stimulated by a landscape he or she created in the same way a painter can.

While this method may not work with everybody, I've seen it work more times than not. I'm convinced if you encourage employees to see the golf course as a painting and their equipment as paintbrushes, they'll discover their creative sides. I know I did.

Wagner, a student at the University of Southern Indiana, worked at Oak Meadow GC for six seasons.

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Quotable

"The good news is that I've been in parks and recreation for 22 years. The bad news is that I'm also a lawyer."

— *John McGovern, chairman of the National Alliance of Accessible Golf*

"Perhaps you thought the most bizarre thing was watching three days of golf on TV without a single commercial. You needed a bladder the size of pony keg to get through it."

— *Sports Illustrated columnist Rick Reilly on the no-commercial break strategy during televising of The Masters.*

"Last spring, some areas in the Northeast experienced water restrictions. That's unheard of, but it's happening more and more."

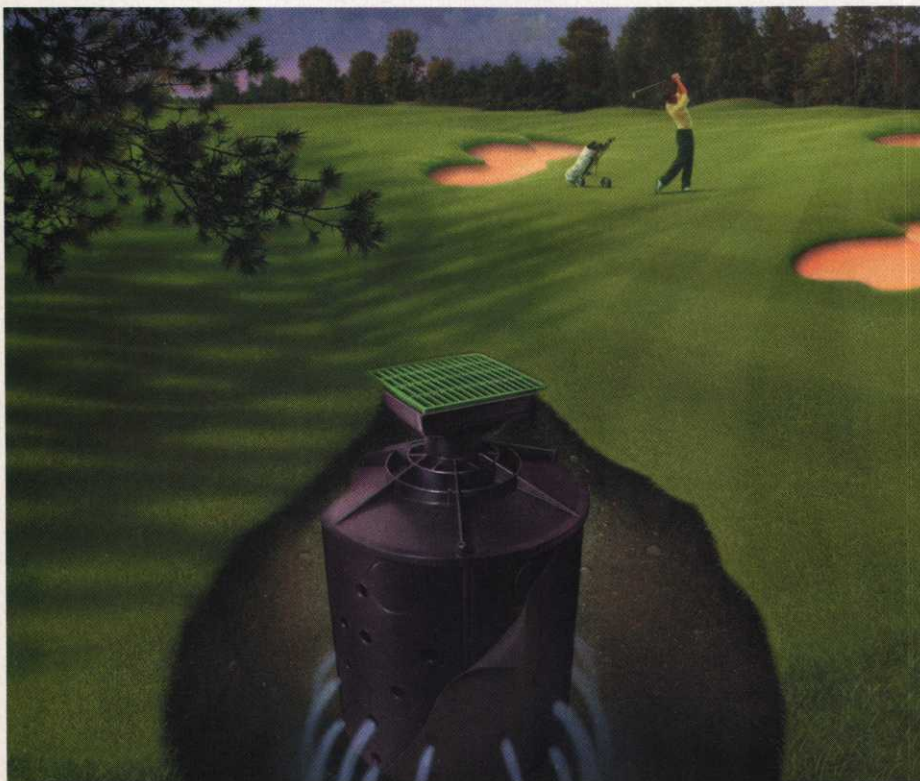
— *Roeland Kapsenberg, president and CEO of Barenbrug USA*

"There's nothing magical about having a 12-inch root depth."

— *Architect Michael Hurdzan, of Hurdzan/Fry Golf Course Design, suggesting superintendents can work with a shorter root zone if they are forced to use poor quality sands in their greens*

"Agronomically speaking, it's flat-out crazy. But you can't argue with the results."

— *Mike Goatley, turf professor at Mississippi State University, on winter overseeding of warm-season turfgrasses.*



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