

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Architects, builders join Golf Industry Show

The architects and builders have joined the crowd.

The American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) and the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA) announced in November that their organizations have joined the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the National Golf Course Builders Association (NGCOA) to stage the Golf Industry Show in Orlando beginning in February.

The Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) will join the big show in 2007.

The GCBA and ASGCA previously had a presence at the GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show in conducting a variety of events for its constituents.

"We're excited to participate in the Golf Industry Show," said ASGCA President Bill Love. "As one of the allied associations of golf, it made sense that ASGCA fully support an initiative that is bringing the industry together."

"We are pleased to join our partners in the Golf Industry Show," said GCBA President Tommy Sasser. "From the GCBA member standpoint, exposure to key decision-makers, whether by exhibiting or networking, is of significant value. From the attendee perspective, securing comprehensive business solutions from those who own, build and manage a course will only strengthen their facility's operations."

Bayer moving business group

Bayer Environmental Science's business group will move its North American operations from Montvale, N.J., and Birmingham, Ala., to Research Triangle Park, N.C., the Region Americas headquarters for Bayer Crop-

Briefs continue on page 14

Phyllis Latshaw with her husband Paul R. and son Paul B.



COURTESY OF THE LATSHAW

Industry Loses a 'First Lady'

PHYLLIS LATSHAW DIES AT 63

By Larry Aylward, Editor

Sadly, Paul R. Latshaw, regarded as one of the greatest superintendents the golf course maintenance industry has ever seen, lost his best friend in October — his wife Phyllis. She died at 63 after a brief illness. The Latshaws lived in Souderton, Pa.

In 2001, Latshaw, former superintendent of such great courses as Oakmont Country Club, Augusta National, Congressional Country Club, Riviera Country Club and Winged Foot Golf Club, told *Golfdom* how fortunate he was to have a wife who understood what it necessitated to be a top superintendent, as in working long hours and on weekends, not to mention moving from city to city to work at some of the greatest clubs in the world. Paul called Phyllis his best friend.

"If you want to be successful in this business, you have to be willing

to work long hours," Latshaw said. "That could be a real problem if you don't have a wife who understands. I was lucky."

Phyllis, a first lady of sorts to the industry, provided Paul with unwavering support in his career goals. They were married for more than 40 years.

Phyllis also leaves one son, Paul B., the certified superintendent of Muirfield Village Golf Club near Columbus, Ohio. Paul B., regarded as one of the top young superintendents in the business, said his mother taught him a lot about responsibility and work ethic, among other things.

Phyllis, who grew up on a dairy farm in Liberty, Pa., was her husband's and son's most ardent supporter. She only wanted the best for them.

"I always wanted him to be happy and successful, and I would do whatever I could to make that happen," Phyllis told *Golfdom* in 2001, when asked about her support for her husband's career. "It was important for me to see him happy."

Business briefs

Briefs continued from page 12

Science. The move, set for mid-2005, is intended to increase efficiencies within the company overall by bringing together all three of its business groups, BioScience, Crop Protection, and now Environmental Science, in one location. Bayer Environmental Science employs about 90 people collectively in Montvale and Birmingham.

Harrell's Turf Specialty formed

Harrell's Turf Specialty (HTS) LLC is a new company created from Harrell's Fertilizer and former Simplot Partners Turf employees. HTS will serve the turf industry in the Northeast. The company's principals are Jack Harrell Jr., chairman; David Schermerhorn, president; and Don Hollinger, senior vice president.

Quality Golf, Schmidt-Curley align

Quality Golf and Schmidt-Curley Design have formed a strategic alliance to offer golf course design, turn-key construction and construction management services to investors both in Thailand and throughout Asia.

Simplot appoints group

The J.R. Simplot Company announced the appointment of Doug Brede, Chris Claypool and Glenn Jacklin to coordinate the marketing, research and production operations of Jacklin Seed. The group combines more than 47 years of turfgrass industry experience.

N.M. Course 'Hails' Charitable Members

VOLUNTEERS GET ON HANDS AND KNEES

TO FIX STORM-INDUCED DIVOTS

By Thomas Skernivitz, Managing Editor

Fork in hand, members of the New Mexico Tech Golf Course got on their knees Oct. 9 to erase the effects of a freak hailstorm four days earlier.

Forty-two volunteers, most of whom were members of the Socorro, N.M.-based course, repaired four of the property's 20 greens. The remaining 16 greens, including a putting green and chipping green, were still in need of attention, which is understandable. Course officials estimated that 30 minutes of baseball-sized hail did as much damage to the greens as a year's worth of golfers.

"One of our statisticians figured there are about six divots per square foot," said Tiger Montano, the course's assistant golf pro. "The average green here is 2,500 square feet, so there's about 15,000 divots per green and 270,000 divots on the whole course."

Under the guidance of superintendent Mike Jones, the volunteers were split into groups of 10, with each spending about four hours on a green. After popping out the holes with ordinary dinner forks, they were treated to a tournament afterward. The remaining greens were playable, although players were being asked to repair 10 divots per green.



PHOTODISC

Course officials estimated that 30 minutes of baseball-sized hail did as much damage to the greens as a year's worth of golfers.

Make No Mistake — Dangerfield Got Respect

We miss Rodney Dangerfield, who died recently at 81. And we will continue to miss the extraordinary comedian, especially when we see him in *Caddyshack*, which we watch often.

We assume that you can relate to our sentiments. Dangerfield, who starred as Al Czervik in *Caddyshack*, almost stole the show from Bill Murray (Carl Spackler) in the film. (One of our favorite Czervik recitals from the movie is: "Tell the cook this is low-grade dog food. I've had better food at the ballgame, you know? This steak still has marks from where the jockey was hitting it.")

Larry Mintz, the University of Maryland's director of the Art Gliner Humor Center, remembers Dangerfield as a "hugely entertaining" comic whose humor in movies and stand-up comedy harkened back to the days of the "little man" who always had a ready quip or one-liner for any situation.

"The 'little man' goes back to the 20s and the literary personae of Thurber, Benchely, Perelman and White, among others," Mintz said in a press release from *Newswise*. "It is also expressed in comic strips in the persons of Charlie Brown and Dagwood Bumstead among

others, and elsewhere in the popular culture. Audiences laugh at the 'poor soul' as exaggerated images of their own vulnerability, anti hero status and necessary humility. But the 'little man' also has a tricky, sneaky, sly, side of his personality. He strikes back, rarely directly but through ironic victories achieved in spite of the odds against him. He survives."

Mintz said Dangerfield "got no respect," but in reality he was highly respected because he just made people laugh.

Rest in peace, Rodney.

Green Is Good

PROJECT EVERGREEN SEEKS TO EDUCATE
CONSUMERS ABOUT HEALTHY LANDSCAPES,
SUCH AS GOLF COURSES

By Laura Frey

As the activist threats increase and threaten to decrease the green spaces, protecting the industry has become increasingly important. That's why a committed group of green industry professionals created the organization called Project EverGreen, which plans to educate consumers about the many benefits of healthy landscapes and green spaces.

The 1-year-old group is the first organization to make a concerted effort to reach and educate consumers about green spaces and is made up of an alliance of a dozen end-user associations (including the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America), suppliers, distributors, media companies and other organizations. The organization is in the midst of raising \$1 million, which would allow the group to kick-off a national consumer marketing campaign.

The campaign will feature grassroots tactics including the development of messages and educational materials for green industry companies, professional market research, public relations efforts and an in-depth consumer Web site to educate consumers about the importance of green spaces. The goal of the consumer campaign is to resolve the misinformation consumers receive and focus on the positives that healthy landscapes and other green spaces such as golf courses can provide.

Den Gardner, the executive director of Project EverGreen, says the organization's mission is straightforward — to raise awareness of the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of landscapes and promote the significance of those who preserve and enhance green spaces at home, work and play.

"The consumer marketing campaign is intended to support our mission statement, while defending the green industry from unnecessary attack," Gardner said.

So far more than \$450,000 has been raised from companies, associations, contractors, lawn care companies and other suppliers, and Project EverGreen continues to seek financial commitments from all facets of the industry. Project EverGreen also needs help in proactively promoting the green industry to everyone. To make a donation or share your ideas and support, please contact the organization at 877-758-4835 or at www.projectevergreen.com.

Frey represents Project EverGreen.

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It's a Great Time to be an Independent Distributor

A Commentary by Frans Jager

For the last 10 years, prognosticators have predicted the death of independent distributors in the golf industry. First the Internet was supposed to replace them. Then basic manufacturers were supposed to sell directly to superintendents. The debate surely left some superintendents wondering where they would be buying their products from next.

This is no small concern for them. The independent distributors network often offers superintendents genuine partners in their efforts to provide optimum golf course conditions. When there's an outbreak of disease and superintendents need a case of fungicide delivered first thing the next morning, an independent distributor is often the one who can make that happen. If independent distributors disappeared from the scene, many superintendents fear they would lose a valuable resource.

I'm here to tell superintendents to stop worrying about the disappearance of the independent distributor because it hasn't happened yet — and it isn't likely to happen in the near future.

In fact, it's a great time to be an independent distributor. It's my contention that we are in the midst of an inexorable shift in the balance of power in our industry from the manufacturer to the distributor. Not long ago, superintendents could only buy chemicals from one of the basic manufacturers. Today we see the number of supply sources for our business multiplying, driven by globalization and the huge U.S. market (compared to the turf and ornamental market in the rest of the world). That means more options and lower

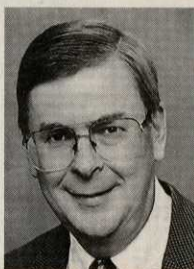
prices for superintendents. It also forces basic manufacturers to reach out to those in closest contact with the superintendents — in other words, independent distributors.

It's a good time to be independent because the shift brings the inherent strengths of independent distributors to the fore, including all of the things superintendents value so highly in their current relationships:

- customer intimacy;
- customer service;
- cost control;
- stability in front of the customer;
- unequivocal dedication to end-users only;
- local knowledge;
- flat organizations;
- personal and accountable ownership on site; and
- rapid decision-making.

I say to my fellow independents: You know the customer, and the customer knows you and trusts you. You control access to the end-user. As long as you don't give away the keys to the kingdom, you are in the driver's seat. So I urge all the independent distributors out there to take heart and revel in their independence because it's a great time to be in that side of the business.

And superintendents can breathe a little easier. The distribution channels you've relied upon for years will be around for a long time to come.



Frans Jager

Jager is the CEO of PrimeraTurf, a purchasing cooperative for independently owned companies engaged in distribution and resale of products in the professional turf, horticulture and landscape industries.

Quotable

"With another four years of the Bush Administration, the pesticide industry can rest assured that no monumental changes will occur.."

— Allen James, president of the Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE)

"I don't know. I'm not one for stats, not one to keep records. I just feel it's been an incredible year for me. These wins, I

just haven't really sat down and really thought about it, what I've done. I have not enjoyed it yet. ... I'll only enjoy it when the season is over."

— Vijay Singh, after winning the Chrysler Championship, his ninth win of the 2004 season. Singh is the first player in PGA Tour history to win more than \$10 million in a season. (*The Wire*)

"I have what they call parrot knowledge. I repeat a lot of things I've been told."

— Shawn Emerson, director of agronomy for the Golf Club at Desert Mountain in Scottsdale, Ariz.