

# Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

## Business briefs

### Montreal plans pesticide ban

By this summer, new rules banning almost all the use of cosmetic chemical pesticides could be in place in Montreal, according to a recent Canadian news report. Golf courses will not be effected, however.

Montreal has created a new bylaw, considered one of the most strict in North America, that will ban almost all cosmetic use of chemical pesticides, except in a few cases, according to Canadian Broadcasting Corp. News. Chemical pesticides will be allowed on golf courses or during infestations.

The new rules will be implemented throughout the city by next spring, but some areas of Montreal could have them in place this summer.

### Deere says suit is without merit

Responding to publicity from a lawsuit that alleges racial discrimination from a retired employee who's African-American, Moline, Ill.-based John Deere & Co. said it has not denied and will not deny anyone approval to become a John Deere dealer based on race.

Ken Edwards, the former business manager of John Deere's golf and turf products division, filed the lawsuit after two independent owners of John Deere dealerships in Alabama withdrew an offer to sell Edwards the dealerships. They had consented to Edwards' purchase of the dealerships subject to terms and conditions that were agreed to in writing by Deere, Edwards and the independent owners.

Deere said the suit is without merit.

### Nu-Gro acquisition finalized

United Industries Corp., which goes to market as Spectrum Brands, announced it has

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## A New Building for an Old Friend

TROLL 'FLABBERGASTED' BUT HONORED THAT UMASS WILL NAME RESEARCH FACILITY AFTER HIM **By Anthony Pioppi**

**T**he movers and shakers behind an effort to build a research building for the turf program at the University of Massachusetts gathered at the annual New England Regional Turf Conference and Show in early March in Providence, R.I.

The get together was not so much an effort to drum up more money, but to thank those involved in fund-raising and to tip a collective hat to Joe Troll, the longtime plant and soil science department head for whom the building will be named.

The fund-raising is necessitated by the continuing deterioration of the existing facilities, coupled with financial trouble within the Massachusetts state university system. UMass has two-year and four-year turf programs.

More than \$450,000 of the needed \$700,000 to help build the Joseph Troll Research Center has been

raised thus far. The university will contribute the remaining money. An estimated \$1.5 million is needed for the project.

Troll said he was caught off guard when he was asked to use his name for the building. "I was flabbergasted," he said.

Troll, 83, retired from UMass in 1985 after 28 years in the department. The turf school is one of the oldest in

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Joseph Troll speaks at a fund-raiser for the UMass turf center named after him.

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closed its previously announced acquisition of Nu-Gro. The transaction creates a company with about \$750 million in pro forma net sales.

### **LESCO net sales up, but golf down**

Cleveland-based LESCO announced that net sales in the first quarter of 2004 increased 8 percent to \$102 million from \$94.5 million in the first quarter of 2003. But golf gross sales declined 4 percent to \$17.2 million vs. \$17.9 million last year.

### **Labeling likely for irrigation**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is likely to make controllers the first irrigation products to get water-efficient labeling from a proposed water-conservation program, according to Tom Kimmell, executive director of the Irrigation Association.

### **Becker Underwood buys Bio-Care**

Ames, Iowa-based Becker Underwood acquired Bio-Care Technology Proprietary Ltd. of Australia, an Australian biotechnology business whose products are used as seed inoculants and biopesticides in agricultural and horticultural applications.

### **Rain Bird relocating golf division**

Rain Bird is relocating the headquarters of its Golf Division to Tucson, Ariz., from Azusa, Calif. Rain Bird says the move will allow various divisions to take advantage of "knowledge-sharing opportunities and increase synergies throughout the organization."

### **Toro awarded patents**

The Toro Co. was recently awarded two patents by the United States Patent Office for its innovations on the Toro Greensmaster, Flex 21 and the Toro Reelmaster cutting units.

### **Weed recognized for renovation**

Bobby Weed and his team at Weed Golf Course Design earned a Private Course Renovation of the Year honor from *Golf Inc.* magazine for the firm's work on White Manor Country Club outside Philadelphia. Weed Design is based in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

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the country, opening in 1927 and producing hundreds of superintendents who worked in New England and beyond. Many current and former superintendents fear the two-year program, or the entire school, could be eliminated as part of cost-cutting measures by the state.

"This will create a strong program that can survive the vagaries of budget cuts and survive through good times and bad," said Steve Goodwin, associate dean for the college of natural resources and the environment.

"The torch is in our hands," said Paul Miller, the long-time superintendent at Nashawtuc Country Club in Concord, Mass.

A group of current department members and superintendents came together nearly a year ago to begin fund-raising efforts. Twenty captains were chosen to contact 20 alumni and ask for donations. The effort was low key with no formal announcement.

According to Miller, now that alumni have stepped up to the plate, the next phase will be to contact the commercial side of the turf business for donations.

Already TurfLinks, based in Hudson, Mass., has committed \$100,000 to the effort. Sawtelle Brothers, the Lawrence, Mass.,

equipment and irrigation distributor, also made a contribution.

The new building will not just benefit superintendents. Cliff Drezek, vice president of the Massachusetts Association of Lawn Care Professionals, was also in attendance to support the effort. The MALCP has already given money to the fund drive.

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— STEVE GOODWIN

"Many of the contributors and those involved with the fund-raising effort have benefited in the past from the research that UMass has provided," said Drezek, operations manager for Green Lawns Plus. "The research can be brought to another level when the center becomes a reality."

If all goes as planned, the new building could be completed by the time the 2005 New England Turf Show rolls around.

*Pioppi is a contributing editor for Golfdom.*

## **Golfdom to Host Seminar**

You're invited to attend the first *Golfdom*-sponsored seminar and workshop at the International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo in Louisville, Ky., on September 23-24.

The speaker lineup includes Joe Vargas of Michigan State University; Karl Danneberger of Ohio State University; design expert and *Golfdom* contributing editor Geoff Shackelford; and *Golfdom* publisher Pat Jones. Also, Jay Rehr, former chief mechanic at Augusta National Golf Club, will conduct a half-day workshop on equipment maintenance for technicians.

In addition to the education, EXPO will also have a special golf equipment area in addition to its usual indoor show and hands-on outdoor demo area. The basic seminar and show fee is \$100 and workshops are \$75 more. For more information and to register, contact <http://expo.mow.org>. Also, look for more details on the event on page 85.