

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

CMAA joins the big show

Who says three is a crowd?

First it was the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) teaming up for their own trade show, specifically the Golf Industry Show. Now the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) will join that show in 2007 in Anaheim, Calif.

"We have spent years of cooperative dialogue with our allied associations, and we are delighted to move forward with this initiative," CMAA CEO Jim Singerling said.

Steve Mona, CEO of the GCSAA, says companies that exhibit in all three shows will find the prospect of going to one show "quite attractive."

"Beyond the obvious efficiencies and savings, the fact that so many key decision makers are going to be in the same location is being very well-received," Mona said.

KSU, PTI join forces

A school and a supplier are teaming up to better the industry. Kansas State University has partnered with Sylacauga, Ala.-based Pursell Technologies Inc. (PTI) to enhance Kansas State's golf course management program by exposing turf students to new technology and turf-fertility innovations.

"I see it as cutting-edge technology meets cutting-edge golf course management education with the program we have here," says Jack Fry, professor of horticulture and director of Kansas State's golf course management program for Kansas State.

David Gourlay, certified superintendent and director of golf and general manager of operations for Kansas State-owned Colbert Hills Golf Course, says 150 students are

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Get Ready to Pay More for Fertilizer

INCREASE IN NATURAL GAS PRICES COULD CAUSE HIGHER COST

Superintendents may be in for another year of high fertilizer costs.

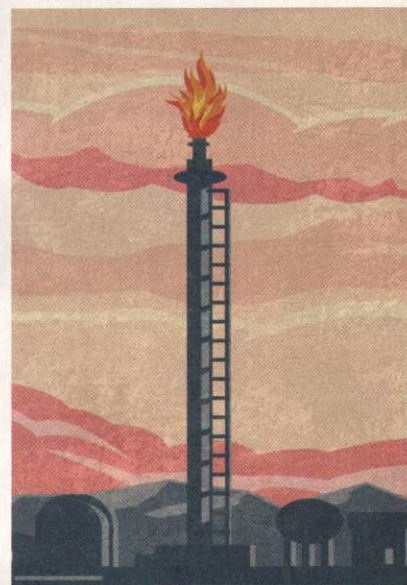
The U.S. Department of Energy recently released its first estimate of natural gas prices, another projected historical high, which translates into higher fertilizer costs for the fall compared to this past spring.

"The Department of Energy expects natural gas prices to climb to about \$6.20 to \$6.50 per million BTUs (British Thermal Units) this fall," said Matt Roberts, an Ohio State University agricultural economist. "That works out to fertilizer prices of \$450 per ton. In the spring, prices were averaging around \$400 per ton."

Natural gas prices are currently under \$6 per million BTUs — lower than usual because of unseasonably cool temperatures across much of the country. But whether those prices remain low heading into fall and winter remains to be seen.

"If this fall and winter are warm, like last year, we could see those projected prices decline," said Roberts. "But if it's a cold and long winter, those prices could climb quickly."

Roberts said there's almost a direct relationship between wholesale fertil-



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izer costs and natural gas prices. "And because of the volatility of the natural gas market, it's becoming more difficult for growers to lock in their fertilizer prices with distributors," he added.

High summer and winter energy consumption, along with declining domestic natural gas inventories and limited import suppliers, are just some of the factors behind the rise in natural gas prices in recent years.

It seems the trend may continue for some time.

This story was compiled from a news release from The Ohio State University.

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now enrolled in Kansas State's program. Gourlay believes PTI can contribute to the development of the students and program.

Floratine, Valent team up

Floratine Products Group and Valent Bio-Sciences Corp. signed a joint agreement to develop new biological nematocide technology. Valent will provide technical information and materials on its nematode control products, and Floratine will help develop their commercial uses in the professional turf industry.

Deere posts strong quarter

Moline, Ill.-based Deere & Co. announced worldwide net income of \$401.4 million, or \$1.58 per share, for the third quarter ended July 31, compared with net income for the same period last year of \$247.5 million, or \$1.02 per share. For the first nine months, net income was \$1.049 billion, or \$4.14 per share, vs. \$572.4 million, or \$2.37 per share, last year. Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division sales were up 3 percent for the quarter and 17 percent for nine months.

ITODA honors Moore

The Independent Turf and Ornamental Distributors Association (ITODA) presented Demie Moore of Aquatrols Corporation of America with its Distinguished Service Award. Moore chaired ITODA's Professional Development Committee, which plans all the organization's educational programming. Moore currently heads Aquatrols Commitment to Excellence (ACE) initiative.

New golf course sales group formed

Coldwell Banker Commercial Nicholson-Williams Realty launched a golf course sales group by engaging the support of Coldwell Banker Commercial affiliates nationally and appointed Art West to head the group. The headquarters of the new group is in Jacksonville, Fla.

Clarification

In September's Hot Products section, North American Green's phone and fax numbers should have read: phone, 800- 772-2040, fax, 812-867-0247

Hot Stuff (and Cool, too)

GEOTHERMAL HEAT EXCHANGE COULD PROVIDE FINANCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS TO GOLF COURSES.

JUST ASK SUTTON BAY *By Mark Leslie*

When playing golf at the Sutton Bay Club, a remote property in the Badlands along Lake Oahe in northern South Dakota, one can't help but feel solitude and serenity. And yet, that intangible ingredient, remoteness, supplied one of the greatest challenges to Sutton Bay's builders — how to heat and cool all the structures with single-phase electrical power.

Their solution, geothermal heat exchange, could provide financial and environmental benefits not only for Sutton Bay, but for golf courses around the country. A technology that has been greatly improved over the last 30 years, geothermal systems are among the alternatives to electricity and oil recommended by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses.

"We had to bring the power a mile and a half to the lodge area, then another quarter to a third of a mile down the hill to the duplexes and fourplexes," explained Sutton Bay partner/general manager Mark Amundson. "The single-phase power we had did not provide sufficient amperage to run air-conditioning and heating systems."

In a land where temperatures can dip well below 0 degrees and soar to above 100 degrees, Sutton Bay's developers needed both. And they needed it for their lodge, five fourplexes (units with four bedrooms and four baths with a common living area), three twoplexes (containing two bedrooms and a central bathroom), and maintenance complex, all of which sit on a hilltop and along its side overlooking the lake 300 feet below. In all, the buildings encompass 36,000 square feet of living space in addition to the main maintenance complex.

"Sutton Bay had all the classic reasons to go geothermal," said Mark Grebner, a principal of West Plains Engineering of Sioux Falls, S.D., who consulted on the project. "It didn't have three-phase power. And it was a remote site, with no natural gas available since it would have to be trucked from 30 miles away."

"The lack of three-phase power drove us in that direction," Amundson acknowledged. "Geothermal is the most efficient heating and cooling system in ex-

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF SUTTON BAY CLUB

Fully heated and cooled by geothermal technology, the lodge at Sutton Bay Club includes a dining room, lounge with large fieldstone fireplaces, exercise and locker rooms, a gathering area, second-story lookout bar and a private wine cellar.

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istence. And it is the least expensive to operate over time."

While installation of the geothermal system cost about \$150,000 to \$175,000 more up front than typical heating and cooling systems, Amundson expects to recoup that expense in seven years through savings in operation and rebates from electrical companies.

Grebner said the normal payback period is actually five years on buildings used year-round because its cost of operation is 20 percent that of traditional systems.

"If you're building a new home and comparing geothermal to fuel oil, you will find the geothermal system will cost \$5,000 more. But you will reduce air-conditioning and heating costs to 20 percent of normal costs," Grebner said. "It is a huge deal."

West Plains Engineering has consulted on installation of geothermal sys-



A well-drilling rig goes to work next to one of Sutton Bay's living quarters.

tems in schools and office buildings that are much bigger than Sutton Bay; rest areas that are much smaller; and even one other golf course, municipally owned Jones Park Golf Course in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Jones Park Director of Golf Tom Lavrenz said the unit, installed this spring, is "working phenomenally."

"This is not unusual in the Plains," said Bill Kubly, CEO of Landscapes Unlimited, which built and is part owner of Sutton Bay Club. "It seemed a perfect way to accomplish what we wanted."

Indeed, expertise in geothermal technology has increased exponentially since heat pumps were introduced in the '70s, when developers explored the possibilities of using the earth as a gigantic "heat exchanger." Doug Chase of Chase Drilling of Wessington Springs, S.D., which drilled Sutton Bay's 300 wells, said the technology has gained in popularity because of increased oil and propane costs and its environmental friendliness.

Explaining the technology, the Geothermal Heat Pump Consortium states: "The Earth's natural heat is collected in winter through a series of pipes, called a

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loop, installed below the surface of the ground or submersed in a pond or lake. Fluid circulating in the loop carries this heat to the home. An indoor geoexchange system then uses electrically driven compressors and heat exchangers in a vapor compression cycle — the same principle employed in a refrigerator — to concentrate the Earth's energy and release it inside the home at a higher temperature. In typical systems, duct fans distribute the heat to various rooms.

"In summer, the process is reversed in order to cool the home," the Consortium continues. "Excess heat is drawn from the home, expelled to the loop, and absorbed by the Earth. Geoexchange systems provide cooling in the same way that a refrigerator keeps its contents cool — by drawing heat from the interior, not by injecting cold air."

Leslie is a freelance writer from Monmouth, Maine.

Quotable

"Speaking of industry trends — these days a golf course superintendent is just a salesman in training."

— *John Kopack, former superintendent of the Legacy Club at Alaquia in Florida and now a sales representative for Pro Plus.*

"That's not too bad, is it? I've had a good run. I'm not disappointed about the ranking; I'm disappointed in not winning."

— *Tiger Woods, after losing golf's No. 1 ranking to Vijay Singh after 264 weeks. (Here's betting Tiger regains the ranking as fast as you can say Augusta National three times.) (Associated Press)*

"We lost part of the roof on the maintenance building. I now have a 'skylight' in my office."

— *Joe Boe, superintendent of Coral Oaks Golf Course in Cape Coral, Fla., after his course took a hit from Hurricane Charley.*



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