

## Off The Fringe

# Asst. Superintendents Discover What It Takes to Cut Mustard

By Thomas Skernivitz, Managing Editor

**T**he superintendents of tomorrow had best be ready to treat gray leaf spot one hour and pass Grey Poupon to the VIP from the water district the next.

That was the take-home message of the fifth-annual Assistant Superintendent Boot Camp, hosted by the Northern California Golf Association in Pacific Grove, Calif.

In what was a perfect metaphor for the all-around effort that it takes to be a modern-day superintendent, Monday's 14-hour day started with a tour of the Carmel Area waste treatment plant and ended with etiquette lessons.

Talk about going from the outhouse to the Pebble Beach penthouse.

Yours truly got to tag along with 39 other participants, primarily assistant superintendents from California and Nevada, as well as a few interns and turf science students.

Having grown up a few miles downwind from a sewage treatment plant in Northeast Ohio, the morning trip was particularly enlightening. I was finally able to put a face to the smell. Best of all, I can now safely say that Carmel's you-know-what doesn't stink any less than Cleveland's you-know-what.

"The bottom 2 feet of this," plant superintendent Mark Scheiter said, pointing to a vat of churning raw sewage, "is the worst substance known to man. ... You get this stuff on your hands, and it's not going to come off for two or three days no matter how much you wash it."

That might rub Rebecca Black the wrong way — if, of course, she had an unruly bone in her body. The etiquette specialist put on a two-part presentation that had just about every attendee wondering if he or she wasn't third-generation Java Man.

At dinner, in-between her sessions, Black walked from table to table, watchful as to whether her advice was sticking

**Nearly every attendee was wondering if he or she wasn't third-generation Java Man.**

## Congratulations Iowa State!

Nick E. Christians, Ph.D.  
Horticulture Professor  
Iowa State University

Trion Lifts, Inc., the leading manufacturer of turf maintenance equipment, appreciates the efforts of Mark Howieson and Iowa State University in conducting two important studies regarding mower adjustments and reel sharpening. They show your school's dedication to advancing research and education.

In lieu of our company's attendance at various annual golf industry trade shows in 2006, Trion believes its resources are much better spent in supporting schools that are making a difference in our industry. To that end, we are pleased to announce Iowa State University as the latest recipient of a Trion Pro-M workstation.

Thanks again for your research that will promote further improvements in equipment and maintenance technology.

John M Beattie, President  
Trion Lifts, Inc.



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like the sludge. Meanwhile, we the eaters couldn't have been more nervous and meticulous in our every move had we been trying to defuse a bomb.

Consider that during a business meal you should:

- ▶ not hover over your food but sit up straight;
- ▶ not place a utensil on the table once it is used;
- ▶ not blow on hot food;
- ▶ not lick your fingers;
- ▶ not push food onto your fork with your thumb.

No problem, you're thinking? Well, try scraping out the last remnants of a baked potato without using your fingers. It ain't, er, isn't that easy.

Aside from reverse osmosis and proper decorum, the boot camp had plenty to offer between Sunday evening and Tuesday afternoon. Drs. Fred Yelverton, Leah Brilman and Frank Wong touched on a variety of scientific topics, including weeds, seed breeding and fungicide application.

Jon Scott, the vice president of agronomy on the PGA Tour, detailed the resurrection of San Francisco's Harding Park Golf Course, the site of the American Express Championship. Randy Kane broke down bunkers, and Gail Rogers spoke on proper course marking.

On the safety side, John Lamb, a toxicology management specialist from the California Poison Control System, dis-



Attendees practice the Heimlich maneuver on each other.

cussed pesticides. And representatives of the Pebble Beach fire department gave a refresher course on first aid.

By the time everyone had been paired to play Poppy Hills Golf Club, home of the NCGA, the boot camp had been declared a success by its organizer, Mike McCullough, the NCGA's director of turfgrass services.

"For somebody that's young and is really wanting to climb up the ladder, you need to separate yourself," McCullough said. "And being a superintendent is not easy. You have to be a jack-of-all-trades. You have to change hats all the time."

Apparently, the boot camp is paying dividends. McCullough estimates that 20 previous attendees are now superintendents.

This year's class holds just as much promise, if not more, thanks to the etiquette lessons. They wouldn't be caught dead wearing one of those many hats to the dinner table.

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