

# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### Bayer joins John Deere One Source

John Deere Golf & Turf One Source says it has reached a sub-distribution agreement with Bayer Environmental Science to offer its fungicide, herbicide and insecticide products.

"Understanding many of our customers are loyal to the Bayer brand, it was critical for our distributors to provide these high-quality products," says Gregg Breningmeyer, director of sales and marketing for John Deere Golf & Turf One Source.

Bayer Environmental Science produces many chemical products, including Merit, 26GT and Ronstar. These, along with the full line of Bayer golf course products, are now available for purchase from any North American John Deere Golf & Turf distributor.

### Gullikson honored for environmental prowess

If an environmentalist wants proof that the golf industry can be good for the environment, the golf industry would be smart to point the environmentalist in Jeff Gullikson's direction.

Gullikson, the certified golf course superintendent of Spokane (Wash.) Country Club, was recently awarded the Certis USA Environmental Communicator of the Year Award at the annual Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association (TOCA) held recently in Memphis, Tenn.

### Singleton receives ASGCA's top honor

John T. Singleton of The Toro Company received the Donald Ross Award from the American Society of Golf Course Architects at their recent annual meeting, held in Pebble Beach, Calif. ASGCA presents the Donald Ross Award annually to an individual who has made significant contributions to the

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## Water in So Cal's Spotlight

By Thomas Skernivitz,  
Managing Editor

CLASSIC FILM SUBSTANTIATES  
ASSOCIATION'S EFFORTS IN  
STRESSING VITAL WATER ISSUES  
THROUGHOUT THE WEST

**W**hen it comes to baseball stadiums and the top 100 films according to the American

Film Institute (AFI), I want to see them all. Being a list kind of guy, those two are my guilty pleasures.

Unfortunately, a business trip to San Diego recently never even got me to first base at 2-year-old Petco Field. The Padres were out of town. Until I visit Busch Stadium in St. Louis this summer, I'm stuck at 26 Major League Baseball stadiums.

The good news is that, upon returning home from a water issues seminar sponsored by the San Diego Golf Course Superintendents Association (SDGCA), I immediately upped to 32 the number of top 100 films I've viewed.

Prompting a visit to Blockbuster was one of the conference speakers, Sandra Dunn, a California-based lawyer specializing in environmental issues. In detailing the historical "holiness" of water throughout the West, she cited the 1974 mystery "Chinatown."

Set in the 1930s, the Roman Polanski film — ranked No. 19 by AFI — delves into the world of

shady water rights and land deals. Starring Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway and John Huston, it's definitely a classic (although I wouldn't have ranked it one spot ahead of another Nicholson gem, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest").

More importantly, "Chinatown" really does substantiate the current





efforts of the SDGCA and Southern California Golf Association (SCGA) in stressing the critical nature of water issues throughout the West. Water is gold in California, and golf course personnel had better be on their guard, even if the corruption that had tormented Nicholson's character, Jake Gittes, went down the drain years ago.

"If we're not the proactive ones, we're going to have a governmental agency come tell us, 'You need best management practices, and here's what they are,'" said Sandy Clark, the certified superintendent of Barona Creek Golf Club. "We have to be the engine. We can't be waiting till the tail end and wonder what that parade was that just marched over our head."

Ironically, Southern California is nearing the end of its third-wettest season in

history. San Diego has received nearly 23 inches of precipitation, ranking behind only 25.97 inches in 1883-84 and 24.74 inches in 1940-41.

"We cannot be lulled to sleep by one good rain year," said Clark, who organized and moderated the seminar, titled "The Day the Tap Ran Dry." "That was a hundred-year event that we saw, so I don't think we can comfortably say that we're back in business with water."

The four-hour conference, held at Lomas Santa Fe Country Club in Solana Beach, attracted about 100 superintendents, club managers and owners and featured several speakers in addition to Clark and Dunn. Among the highlights:

► Mark Moede, a local liaison of the National Weather Service, said Californians should heed the weather conditions known as El Nino and La Nina. El Nino seasons are caused by warm water near the equator and result in wetter and cooler conditions along the West Coast. Its inverse, La Nina, leads to drier and warmer conditions in the same area.

"The (systems) you want to key on when you watch the local news or surf the Internet are the status of the El Nino or La Nina," Moede said. "That's probably going to be your best way to determine water usage for the upcoming season."

Unfortunately for superintendents, the next three decades could bring an abundance of dry La Nina

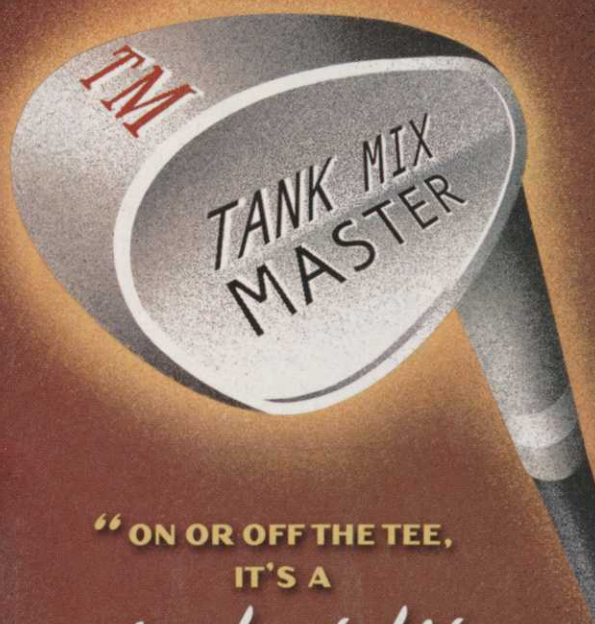
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Golf course water issues were discussed at the seminar, which attracted about 100 people.



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# Talkin' Bugs

John Cunningham, the certified superintendent at Black Diamond Ranch Golf Course in Lacanto, Fla., recently organized a two-day event designed to teach sixth-grade students about insects.

On Day 1 he taught classes in insect physiology and identification at a local school. On Day 2 he invited 150 students and their teachers to his golf course.

**1** Students tour Black Diamond, a 45-hole, Tom Fazio-designed championship course ranked by *Golf Digest* in the "Top 100 in the World." Built on a former stone quarry, the course is the centerpiece of a gated community 90 miles from Tampa.

**2** John Cunningham, center, shows students how he uses light traps to capture beetles and determine threshold levels for timely pesticide applications. Light traps were provided by Bayer Environmental Science to help facilitate applications of Merit insecticide.

**3** Cunningham tells students about the environmental benefits of golf courses. His program is an example of how superintendents communicate the benefits of golf courses within their local communities.



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seasons. Moede described the phenomenon known as the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, a series of 30-year cycles that rotate between El Nino and La Nina.

"What (forecasters) are saying is that we are coming to the end of a 30-year, mostly El Nino oscillation," Moede said. "They're thinking the trend is shifting to this pattern where more of our seasons over the next 30 years are going to be La Nina weather trends, which mean typically less than normal amounts of rainfall."

Of course, that didn't prevent a few dry seasons over the last 30 years, including 5

inches of rain in 2003-04 and 3 inches in 2001-02.

"There are exceptions to the rule," Moede said. "But as a general rule — 70 percent of the time — you can expect this type of scenario during those El Nino or La Nina weather conditions."

► Noting the recent abundance of rainfall, Anatole Falagan, an official with the region's Metropolitan Water District (MWD), said, "What's critically important this year is that we're trying to store all this water."

Falagan said the MWD covers six counties and 5,200 square miles in Southern California, from

Ventura to the Mexican border. Eighteen million people reside or work in the area, with an annual growth rate of 220,000 people.

Golf courses can do their part to conserve water by adhering to the MWD's Innovative Supply Program, which has offered \$250,000 in grants for concepts with the potential to provide new sources of drinking water in Southern California. The United States Golf Association (USGA) received a \$50,000 grant to study golf course on-site recycling.

"Water recycling is typically associated with the county or city sanitation district," Falagan said. "We

want to see how you can actually do on-site recycling, which means that you're located somewhere on the watershed and you're capturing that wastewater stream as it makes its way down."

With more than 320 golf courses in Southern California, the district and USGA are proposing that at least 250 of those courses use potable water by 2025. The result would be 100,000 acre-feet of savings — an acre-foot is about 326,000 gallons, and provides the needs of two typical Southern California families for a year — that would provide enough supply for 200,000 households, Falagan said.



# Quotable

**"Maybe we're all supposed to stink at this. It's our punishment for playing this insane game."**

— *Golf commentator David Feherty on the average golf score, which has not changed for decades. (New York Times)*

**"Leadership can be taught, learned and developed. The pay-back comes both in information gained and in lasting friendships."**

— *Trent Bouts, executive director of the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association.*

**"I do like disease. If that makes me strange, so be it."**

— *Bruce Clarke, director of the Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science and a turf disease aficionado.*

"We're looking for big things out of this study," he added.

Falagan also said the MWD is offering incentives to courses that upgrade their irrigation systems and utilize detailed water budgets.

► Kevin Heaney, the assistant executive director of the SCGA and a representative of the lobbyist group California Alliance for Golf, said many golf course personnel are still a bit apathetic when it comes to water issues.

"They think perhaps the biggest issue confronting golf is the hot golf ball and how the elite players are hitting that hot golf ball and how it's making golf courses

obsolete," he said. "I guarantee you that that is an issue in golf, but that's certainly not the biggest threat to golf. We think water is our single biggest concern at this point, and that's where the California Alliance for Golf is focusing most of its efforts.

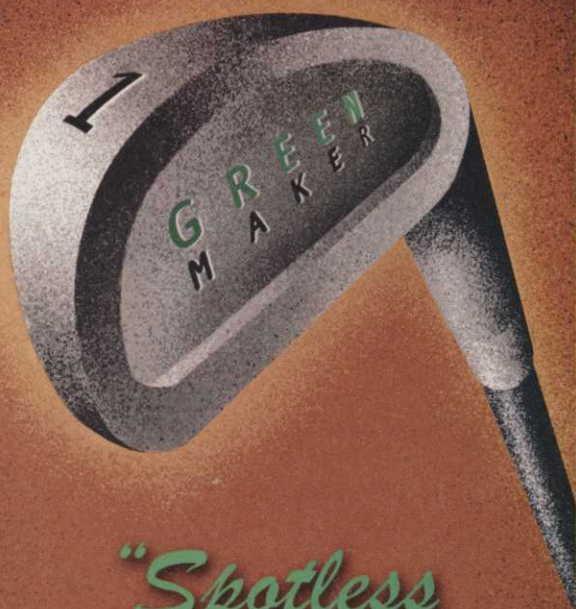
"In the big picture, golf isn't using much water. However, it's also a very visible use of water, and when people are concerned about water, and if their water is restricted at all, the first [one] they are going to point at is the golf course down the street because we do, unfortunately, still have the image of being the fat cats."



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