

## Business briefs

*Briefs continued from page 12*

"It's a great time to look back at our accomplishments, but even more importantly, we want to look ahead to the next 50 years," Stephen Garske, president of Par Aide, said. "We wouldn't be where we are today without the continued support of our dealers and superintendents and the dedication of our suppliers and employees."

The company published a legacy book that includes significant company developments, important events and golf trivia. Some of the stories involve President Dwight D. Eisenhower's gracious acceptance of a Par Aide ball washer, Neil Armstrong's walk on the moon, the U.S. bicentennial and the launch of the hit TV show, "The Simpsons."

### ValleyCrest stages field day

More than 40 superintendents participated in an environmental field day sponsored by ValleyCrest Golf Course Maintenance.

Held at the Plantation at Leesburg (Fla.) and directed by Joellen Zeh, the program manager for the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, the event allowed superintendents to be involved in the detailed evaluation of a golf course property, focusing on best-management practices of environmental planning, wildlife and habitat management, chemical-use reduction and safety, water conservation and water quality management.

### Tee-2-Green goes back to school

As part of a new initiative to help educate turfgrass students on the breeding process and production of developing bentgrass varieties, Hubbard, Ore.-based Tee-2-Green made its first "College Tour" stop by presenting to the local GCSAA Student Chapter at Washington State University in March.

During the presentation, a Tee-2-Green representative discussed various aspects of creeping bentgrass, including how breeders develop and test bentgrass varieties; what techniques are used during production, harvesting and cleaning of seed; and the importance of certification standards when selecting bentgrass varieties.

Tee-2-Green says the College Tour is part of its ongoing initiative of reaching out to turfgrass students across the country.

# One Seed's Staying Power

PENNCROSS CREEPING BENT  
CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

**B**ill Rose chuckles softly when asked about the staying power of Penncross creeping bentgrass, which is celebrating its 50th birthday this year. "We've planned its death about three times that I can remember offhand," says Rose, president of Tee-2-Green.

In 1946 Penn State University Professor Burton Musser established a research and development program to produce seeded bentgrass varieties that were aggressive and disease-tolerant while also having vigor and quick establishment. He wanted a new variety with the ability to tolerate various climates and also exhibit excellent appearance, color and adaptability. The result was Penncross, the most widely used bentgrass variety in the world, Tee-2-Green says. "It's still going strong and is a major part of our sales," Rose says.

When Penn State developed PennLinks and Penneagle, Penncross' demise was predicted. It didn't happen. Then the Penn A and G series came along and Penncross' demise was predicted once again. It didn't happen again.

Rose attributes Penncross' vigorousness to its success. "It's aggressive, especially in the landing area, which takes a beating," he says. "When good golfers hit to the same place all the time, you need a good grass that fills in."

In 1973, Penn State declared Penncross a proprietary or "private" variety. Through a formal agreement, Penn State authorized the Penncross Bentgrass Growers Association of Oregon to receive breeder stolon planting stock for production of commercial seed. The association formed Tee-2-Green to market the Penn bents.

Penncross has taken Rose on a good ride. So has the seed industry in general, which has been a major part of his life for many years.

Rose moved the family from California to Oregon in 1942. The family lived across the street from the largest grass seed farm in Oregon.

Back then Oregon's seed industry consisted of producing annual ryegrass, English perennial ryegrass, Alta tall fescue and colonial bentgrass, Rose recalls.

Rose has witnessed and been a part of many landmarks in the seed industry. He says the emergence of Merion Kentucky Bluegrass in the early '50s, which he later began farming, provided a big boost to his career.

Other industry landmarks, Rose says, include the development of Manhattan perennial ryegrass in the mid-1960s by Dr. Reed Funk of Rutgers University; and the development of Pennfine perennial ryegrass by Dr. Joseph M. Duich at Penn State in 1971.

There are continued challenges as well. For the golf industry, they are development of drought- and disease-resistant varieties.

Rose, who says his passion for the seed industry is still burning strong, has no plans for retirement. "I'd be bored if I retired," Rose says. "There are a still a lot of challenges."

