

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

New year starts with a ... clunk

January didn't just signify a new year and a hoard of resolutions — it also signified a drop in golf rounds played, according to the National Golf Foundation (NGF). Total U.S. rounds played dropped 4 percent in January 2005 vs. January 2004.

The good news (if you want to call it that) is there was a darn good non-economic reason for the big drop. You guessed it, Mother Nature — this time of the rainy kind. The Southwest was awash with record rains the first month of the year and golf rounds plummeted 18.6 percent.

The South Central region was down 15.3 percent. Rounds were up in the Southeast. Central/South Florida was up 0.3 percent and the Southeast states were up 12.3 percent.

Arredondo resigns from GCSAA

Julian Arredondo, the chief operating officer of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) the last two years, has resigned from the association. He came to the GCSAA as its chief financial officer in December 1993 and, in March 2003, replaced Chuck Borman as COO.

"Julian and I came to GCSAA at the same time," GCSAA CEO Steve Mona said. "He played an integral role in strengthening the association and positioning it as a leading golf organization."

Message heard, group says

Project EverGreen, according to its executive director, successfully conveyed its message — that well-maintained green spaces provide economic, lifestyle and environmental benefits to the consumer — in its debut at the Golf Industry Show in February.

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Out of Retirement

MANNY MIHAILIDES COULDN'T BE HAPPIER SELLING AN IRRIGATION PRODUCT THAT HIS SON INVENTED

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

The heck with hanging out at home and swaying in a hammock. Manny Mihailides decided to come out of retirement and sell hose syringing systems. And at 73 years old, the gregarious Mihailides couldn't be happier.

But Mihailides is not selling just any hose system, mind you. It happens to be one invented by his son, David Mihailides, a former Rhode Island superintendent.

"I love it," Manny says of this second career (his first was as salesman in the foodservice industry). "I'm helping my son, and that makes me feel good."

David invented the DGM System (for Direct underGround Maintenance and his initials) earlier in the decade. The DGM System is a syringing hose system that's stored underground near golf course greens. A few years ago David decided to team with Reelcraft Industries, a Columbia City, Ind.-based hose reel producer to manufacture and market his product.

Manny liked the product so much that he decided to end his retirement in 2002 after three years to sell the product. His official title is sales manager for DGM Systems LLC.



Manny Mihailides (left) and his son David. "Our relationship is stronger now than it has ever been," David says.

"He came out of retirement because he doesn't have a still bone in his body," the 41-year-old David says. "He was going crazy doing nothing."

Manny says it's thrilling to sell a product invented by his son.

"He's well known and his product is well known," Manny says. "That's exciting to me and our family."

At the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show, where Reelcraft Industries was an exhibitor, Manny, dressed businesslike in a tweed coat, looked happy to be there. He was enthusiastic when talking about the product to potential customers (picture Dick Vitale talking hoops during the NCAA Tournament).

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PHOTO BY: LARRY AYWARD

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With his son on the road most every week visiting distributors, Manny is the man when it comes to sales. But he doesn't seem overwhelmed by the pressure.

"My biggest asset in the sales business is my enthusiasm," says Manny, who worked for Kraft Foods and Alliant Foods in his previous career. "When I like a product, I get enthusiastic about it and I'm able to sell it."

David wouldn't want anyone else in the sales position.

"We're best friends," he says. "Our relationship is stronger now than it has ever been."

Manny has no plans to re-retire. A colon cancer survivor, Manny is enjoying life and work.

"How long am I going to go?" he asks himself. "I'll go as long as I possibly can. I just enjoy it that much. I'm having a great time."



PHOTO COURTESY: BAYER ES

The assistants recently gathered in Clayton, N.C., to learn a few things about being the head honchos.

Forty-two assistant golf course superintendents from North Carolina and South Carolina attended the 2005 Future Superintendents Academy at the Bayer Environmental Science Development and Training Center. The two-day program, sponsored by Bayer and Toro distributor Smith Turf & Irrigation, focused on personal growth and technical seminars.

Certified Superintendent George Thompson, director of grounds at the Country Club of North Carolina and

**TWO-DAY COURSE OFFERS
TRAINING, INSPIRATION FOR
FUTURE SUPERINTENDENTS**

a teacher at Sandhills Community College, told the group that self-discipline, communications skills, good health and networking are the keys to success in the business.

Other highlights included:

► Tips on grub control from Rick Brandenburg, a North Carolina State University entomologist.

► Test driving a multipurpose prototype of the Sandpro, a single body designed to handle 20 tools ranging from sand rakes to cart-path edgers.

► Developing a personality profile and receiving pointers on working with others who may approach challenges from a different perspective.

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