

## Off The Fringe

### Business briefs

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#### Deere, LESCO Complete Merger

Almost a year after it was announced, the merger between John Deere and LESCO has been completed.

"We are excited our plans have come to fruition, and we now have a more robust, in-house offering for golf industry professionals," said Gregg Breningmeyer, director of sales and marketing for John Deere Golf, in a press release.

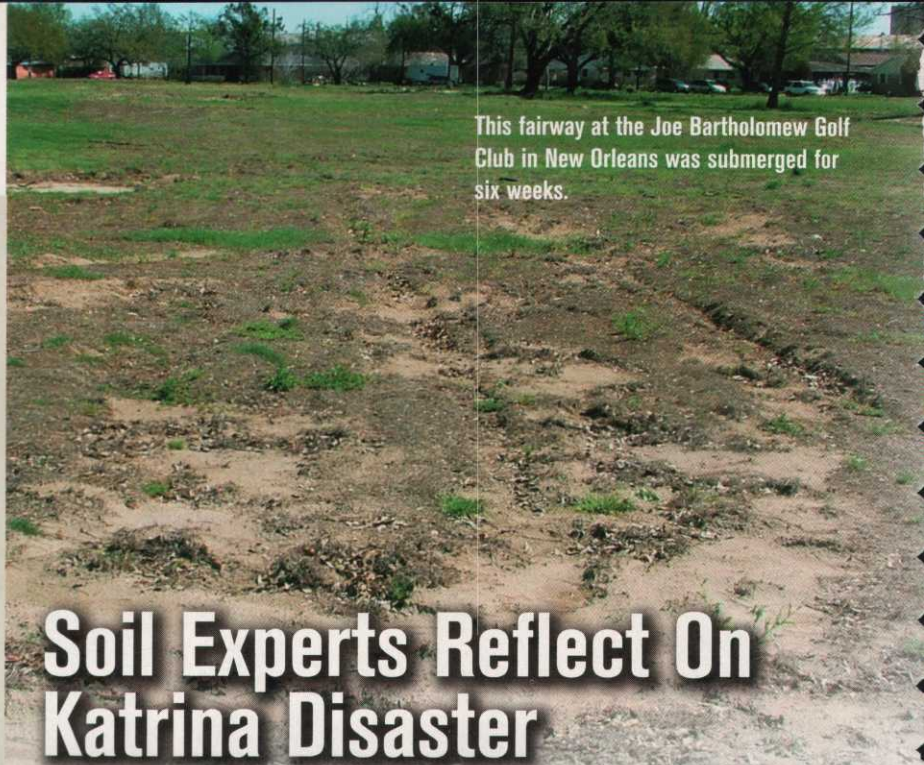
With the merger, John Deere Golf has added about 150 agronomic experts to its sales and support organization, including golf sales representatives and the Stores-on-Wheels (which will be co-branded John Deere and LESCO in the near future). A John Deere spokesperson said there were no layoffs among LESCO's golf sales reps and Stores-on-Wheels employees, and the goal is to grow the business.

"We've looked at where additional support is needed, and we've put in place a two-year plan to reach out to many customers who've previously not had access to our agronomic products," Breningmeyer said.

In 2008 John Deere plans to add resources in several underserved regions of the country, Breningmeyer said.

#### TyraTech, Arysta Team Up

TyraTech, which manufactures natural pesticide products, announced it has achieved development and financial milestones from Arysta LifeScience as part of its 2006 exclusive global licensing and co-development agreement to manufacture and market a number of insecticide products. TyraTech develops proprietary compounds that target receptors found on insects and other invertebrates, but are not found on humans or animals. These compounds, called TyraTech Naturals, are derived from plants and can kill insects with the potency of chemical pesticides but without the same toxicity. The partnership with Arysta is to develop products based on the TyraTech compounds for the control of insects. The partnership has different progressive development stages, which result in milestone payments to TyraTech when reached. ■



This fairway at the Joe Bartholomew Golf Club in New Orleans was submerged for six weeks.

## Soil Experts Reflect On Katrina Disaster

By Curt Harler

**T**wo years after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, soil scientists and conservation leaders swapped ideas and lessons learned from the disaster during the International Annual Meetings of the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA) and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) held recently in New Orleans.

"Hurricane Katrina provided the scientific community with an unparalleled opportunity to guide both ecosystem restoration and the design of measures to protect lives and properties from violent natural events," said Charles Groat, founding director of the public policy center at The University of Texas at Austin.

William Jenkins, president emeritus at Louisiana State University System, said rapid degradation of the Mississippi River delta and climate change has placed the physical and socioeconomic sustainability of coastal Louisiana in doubt.

"We must pursue aggressive coastal restoration or face the daunting implications of inaction," he added.

The seminar went well beyond golf to include issues of crop and

fiber production and even human life. Yet there could well be positive outcomes for both superintendents and other turf managers.

Speakers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service noted the importance of generating interpretative maps with soil suitability data and training response personnel to properly interpret soil information related to the disaster.

Steven Hamburg, associate professor of environmental studies at Brown University, discussed the impact of a storm's frequency and intensity on ecosystem resistance and resilience.

Chris Renschler, associate professor of geography at the University of Buffalo, N.Y., addressed the potential of using integrated natural resources management as a tool for managing natural disasters.

"Field studies, remote sensing, geographic information systems and process-based environmental models are increasingly used in combination to support decision- and policy-making in natural resources or natural hazards management," he said. "Communication is key among all of these areas." ■

Harler is managing editor of *Turf Grass Trends*.