

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Chapters Unite to Form MiGCSA

There's a new chapter association in town. Sort of. Four golf course superintendent association chapters in Michigan have officially merged to form the Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association (MiGCSA).

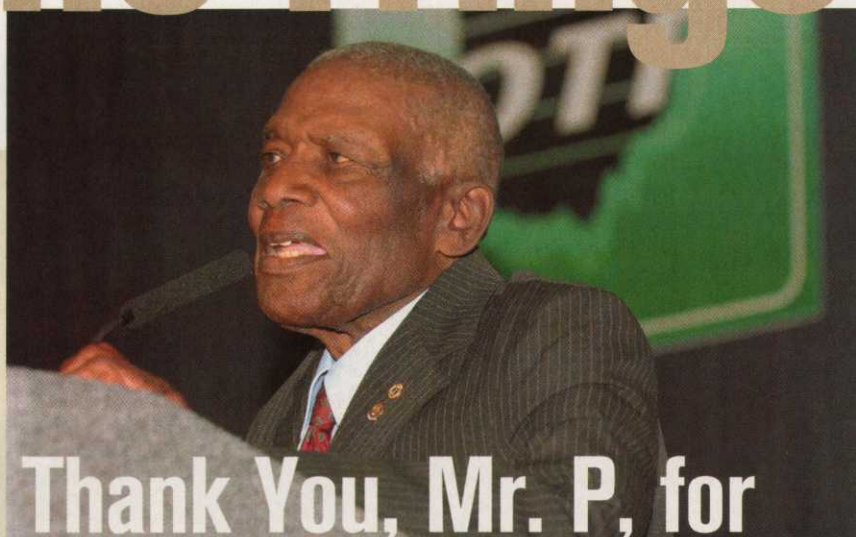
The new chapter will focus efforts on membership benefits, advocacy, environmental stewardship and providing services necessary to educate superintendents on the latest technological advances. The four chapters include the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association, the Western Michigan GCSA, the Greater Detroit GCS and Mid Michigan TMA. The four associations had been discussing a possible merger for about six years. The talks escalated in the past 18 months and resulted in the formation of the MiGCSA Board of Directors, who completed the work necessary to put the merger up for a vote among the membership. Ninety percent of members approved the proposal.

"It was incredible to see the superintendents in Michigan vote overwhelmingly to become a unified force to better provide leadership on the economic, environmental and recreational vitality of golf in the state," said Ron Dahlin, certified superintendent of The Meadows Golf Club' at Grand Valley State University.

Bayer, Nufarm Settle Dispute

Bayer CropScience LP and Nufarm Americas reached a settlement in a patent-infringement lawsuit over imidacloprid on fertilizer. Bayer brought legal action against Nufarm, which has acknowledged that Bayer's patent is "valid and enforceable," according to a Bayer press release. How-

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Thank You, Mr. P, for the Role Model You Are

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

People say that racism continues to run rampant. There's no doubt that bigots still walk the cities and towns of America, but this country has come a long way since Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963. What occurred at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation's (OTF) annual Conference & Show in December is proof. William Powell, a black man who was forced to build his own golf course because he was forbidden to play on white-only courses, received OTF's Professional of the Year Award.

Sixty years ago, the whites in Ohio's golf industry wanted nothing to do with Powell because of his color. But last month, the predominantly white Ohio golf industry honored the 91-year-old Powell with its top award for his accomplishments

in the golf course industry.

This isn't about giving whites a pat on the back for changing their views toward blacks, but I'd say we've all — whites and blacks — made tremendous strides since the racially turbulent 1940s, '50s and '60s. And we should thank people like King and Powell, who helped us see the light, for helping us get to this point.

Powell, "Mr. P" as they call him, was the first and is the only black person to design, build and operate a golf course in the United States — Clearview Golf Course in East Canton, Ohio. But a lot of folks would never have endured what Powell did to get it done.

Powell, who was captain of his high school golf team, fought in World War II. But upon returning home from the war, he had to fight discrimination. The area's golf courses — the ones he had played

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Got a Beautifully Brutal Golf Hole? John Deere Credit Wants to Hear About It



They are beautiful yet brutal. They are holes talked about all season, where a golfer cards a nine, yet somehow scores a miracle birdie the next round. John Deere Credit has launched a search to find the most Beautifully Brutal Golf Holes in North America.

"Course superintendents and architects are extremely proud of their ability to provide a truly memorable golf experience that entices players to come back again and again," says Steve Knutson, director of golf and turf leasing for John Deere Credit. "Showcasing their Beautifully Brutal holes is a recognition of their outstanding work to maintain holes that can be both thrilling and maddening."

During the next six months, golf course superintendents, architects, owners and developers can nominate holes on their courses by submitting photos and descriptions of what makes the holes among the most challenging or brutal in golf. Factors could include the depth of rough, the number and placement of bunkers, location of water, course slope,

speed and undulation of greens as well as the typical scores players post for the holes.

Nominations will be collected from six regions; five in the United States and one in Canada. Entries will be featured on a special contest Web site, www.JohnDeereCredit.com/BrutalGolfHoles, on posters and in national and local media. A panel of editors and others representing the golf media will select winning holes in each region and choose 18 of the regional winners as the Most Beautifully Brutal Golf Holes in North America. The judges include Joe Passov, architectural editor of *Golf* magazine; Jeff Babineau, deputy editor of *Golfweek*; Gary Van Sickle, golf editor of *Sports Illustrated*; and Pat Roberts, publisher of *Golfdom*.

Winning holes will be announced quarterly. Photos and descriptions of the holes will be reprised in a keepsake calendar. For more information visit www.JohnDeereCredit.com/BrutalGolfHoles. ■

Worlds Apart, But Close When It Comes to the Issue of Global Warming

By Curt Harler



In some circles, global warming has become more of a conservative/liberal litmus test or social dividing point than an aspect of scientific research. However, the presidents of two nations facing widely divergent climates agree that global warming is a real problem and will have huge impact on water used in all aspects of the Green Industry.

Iajuddin Ahmed, president of Bangladesh, and Olafur Grimsson, president of Iceland, addressed the issue of global warming at the gathering of the International Annual Meetings of the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) in New Orleans in November.

Both top executives stated, in no

uncertain terms, that global warming is a fact. "Climate change is real," said Ahmed, a former soil science professor at Dhaka University, who studied soils at the University of Wisconsin.

In a separate talk, Grimsson declared the debate "more or less over." There was no question that Grimsson, Ahmed and most of the audience of soil scientists see the United States as the bull in the global warming china shop. Both presidents said they face visible signs of climate change in their own countries.

According to the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Arctic and coastal areas in tropical Asia are extremely vulnerable to projected climate change and its impacts. Iceland, lying just south of the Arctic

Circle, and Bangladesh are therefore at greater risk than other countries.

"Iceland does not need scientific reports to confirm climate change. We see it in the Arctic ice, the receding of our glaciers," Grimsson said.

Ahmed worries that 11.5 percent of his nation could be under water by 2100 if warming continues unchecked. Although its climate is vastly different than Iceland's, "IPCC impact assessments identify Bangladesh as one of the most susceptible countries of the world," he said. "These impacts range from an overall increase in sea level, atmospheric temperature and rainfall to more intense natural disasters in the form of floods, cyclones ... and other consequential impacts."

A few days after Ahmed's talk, Bangladesh was hit by a deadly cyclone. ■

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ever, Nufarm has been granted freedom to market and sell the patented imidacloprid on fertilizer technology. Other terms of the settlement were not disclosed.

Lucas Honored by Carolinas GCSA

Leon Lucas received the Distinguished Service Award from the 1,800-member Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association in November during the CGCSA's annual conference and show. The award is the highest that the organization bestows, and it recognizes outstanding achievement and contribution in the service of golf course superintendents and the golf industry in the Carolinas.

Lucas has worked on the science of golf course turf for 40 years, mostly at North Carolina State University and, since 1998, as agronomist for the Carolinas Golf Association.

Tralies Named Chairman, Michel Appointed President at Club Car

Phil Tralies, president and CEO of Club Car for the past six years, has been named chairman and CEO of the Augusta, Ga.-based company. Gary Michel, a long-time executive within parent company Ingersoll Rand, will assume the newly created position of president and chief operating officer.

The organizational changes position Tralies to focus on developing strategic business opportunities in emerging domestic and international markets, as well as continue to strengthen key customer and industry relationships, according to Jim Bolch, president of Ingersoll Rand's Industrial Technologies sector. Michel will be responsible for overseeing Club Car's day-to-day business operations and developing long-term strategy with Tralies.

Tralies was named president and CEO of Club Car in May 2001 after spending 25 years with Textron. Michel, who has 22 years of experience with Ingersoll Rand, joins Club Car after serving as president of the corporation's Road Development and Utility Equipment businesses.

No More Runaway Golf Cars, Ever

E-Z-GO UNVEILS THE RXV, ITS FIRST
NEW GOLF CAR SINCE 1995

By David Frabotta, Senior Editor

It's true. For the mere price of a fleet upgrade, you'll never need to fish a golf car out of a creek, ravine or irrigation pond again. And you'll be getting more than just a cool new automatic parking brake. With independent suspension, double rack-and-pinion steering, limited slip differential, a cushioned steering wheel and energy-transfer bumpers, among other features, E-Z-GO's new RXV is inching closer to its electric car cousin.

The electric version of the RXV uses an industry-first alternating-current, 48-volt motor, which is 30 percent more efficient than its direct-current TXT predecessor and boasts an extra 10 percent range, according to E-Z-GO.

The new power train might be on schedule with expected product advances, but perhaps the coolest new feature on the electric model is its dual-braking system with a "fail-safe" parking brake that automatically engages when the RXV stops. It incorporates a type of motor brake along with a foot pedal.

Here's how it works: I have no idea how it works, but it's cool. The RXV holds a constant rate of speed while driving regardless of terrain. It's got some oomph when traveling uphill — it peaks at 10 horsepower — and maintains its speed when driving downhill, too. Then, either coast to a stop (it actually coasts without bogging down) or step on the brake to stop. Once you reach the rock-back point (like a legal stop at a stop sign) the automatic parking brake engages, and it's going nowhere. No more clumsy foot flailing. Just jump out, and the car stays.

This braking system also recharges the batteries when brakes are applied, which can increase efficiency up to 30 percent, according to E-Z-GO.

The gas-powered version of the RXV has a 13-horsepower engine with a larger cylinder operating at fewer RPMs than the TXT. That means it delivers better fuel economy with less noise.

"More rounds per car and less energy usage equals cost savings," E-Z-GO President Kevin Holleran told reporters during the RXV unveiling in early November. Holleran, former vice president of sales for the company, was named president two days after the RXV launch. Former E-Z-GO President John L. Garrison Jr. was promoted to president of Textron's Industrial Segment. Textron also owns Jacobsen, Greenlee, Bell Helicopter and Cessna Aircraft Co., among others.

Both the electric and gas versions have overhauled interiors as well, complete with more spacious and ergonomic storage spaces, redesigned hip restraints, a thicker foam seat, wider canopy and a slip-resistant floor mat.

E-Z-GO will begin production on the RXV in January at its new, automotive-inspired production line and corporate headquarters in Augusta, Ga. The RXV will cost about 15 percent more than the TXT, says Kathleen Searle, vice president of communications, and it will come with the company's four-year warranty, which covers everything from one energy-transfer bumper (rated for 5-MPH collisions) to the other. ■



Quotable

"I'm in awe of what you folks do for a living. I don't think there's anything more beautiful than a well-manicured golf course or baseball field."

— *Marty Brennaman, Cincinnati Reds radio announcer and keynote speaker at the 2007 Ohio Turfgrass Foundation's Conference and Show held in December.*

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while a member of his high school team — wouldn't let him tee it up because he was black.

But Powell didn't back down. "I'll just build my own course," he said. It wasn't easy to secure the funding, though, because white-owned banks refused to grant him a loan to buy a dairy farm that he wanted to convert to a golf course. The U.S. government also refused him a GI loan, even after he had just served in World War II.

Powell still didn't give in. Eventually, he teamed with two black doctors whom he was teaching golf to invest in the venture. Clearview's first nine holes opened in 1948.

Powell bought out his two partners in 1959 and added nine more holes in 1978. Clearview is on the Department of the Interior's

National Register of Historic Places.

OTF's award isn't the first time that Powell has received recognition from a very white industry for his accomplishments. It probably won't be the last.

But let's not just remember Powell as a black man who was able to hurdle the barriers of racism. Let's remember Powell as a man who displayed amazing perseverance in the face of an evil that still exists today. The man refused to give in.

At the beginning of his acceptance speech for OTF's award, Powell said the circumstance allowed him the opportunity to thank everyone "associated in golf" for his magnificent career.

Thank you, Mr. P., for the role model you are to the youths and adults of all colors and from all walks of life. ■

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