

Off The Fringe

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

Amanda Pope, a professor at the USC School of Cinematic Arts, called the films “precious.” Pope couldn’t have used a better word.

She was talking about the films she helped judge that were named finalists in Rain Bird’s Intelligent Use of Water Film Competition held in September at The Getty Center in Los Angeles.

Living in parched Southern California, Pope knows a thing or two about water’s preciousness. Rain Bird’s competition, which encourages amateur and experienced filmmakers to use the power of film to bring about a greater awareness of the need for responsible water use, awarded three short films with top honors at the screening event.

The winners are:

- **“Small Changes”** by filmmakers Jennifer and Christopher Gandin Le of Austin, Texas — Jury Award Winner;

- **“The Saving Water Song”** by filmmaker Keith Cantrell of McPherson, Kan. — Audience Award Winner; and

- **“More or Less”** by filmmaker Mark E. Petersen of Boulder, Colo. — Green Industry Award Winner.

Rain Bird presented the Gandin Le couple with a check for \$6,000, while Cantrell received a \$3,000 prize. Petersen received \$6,000.

All of the finalists’ films are available for viewing on the competition’s Web site, www.IUOWFILM.com. Try to set aside a few minutes to watch them. You’ll be glad you did.

I had the honor of being a judge for the competition with Pope and



Movies With a Message

FINALISTS IN RAIN BIRD’S FILM COMPETITION TAKE A SPLENDID APPROACH TO EXPLORE WATER CONSERVATION

Gary McVey, executive director of the American Cinema Foundation; Timothy Brick, chairman of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; and Philip Sokoloski, manager of communications for FilmL.A. While all the films provided a solid message about water conservation, I thought “Small Changes” was the best. The film lasts only 1:59 minutes, but makes great use of that time. In the film, actors go about their daily lives without using water for things like boiling spaghetti and taking showers.

The films are different in their approaches. For example, “One Single Bucket” is a documentary based on Diana Opong-Parry’s upbringing in Ghana. And “Saving Water Song,” created by the talented 16-year-old Cantrell, is a music video.

This year, Rain Bird, in cooperation

***Golfdom* Publisher Patrick Roberts (left) and Rain Bird Corporate Marketing Director Dave Johnson (right) present the Green Industry Award check to Mark Petersen.**

with Questex Media Group, which publishes *Golfdom* magazine, presented a Green Industry Award to Mark Petersen of Boulder, Colo., for his film, “More or Less.” Petersen is president of Water Catch Inc., a service company that offers irrigation repairs for residential and commercial properties. Petersen also specializes with wire troubleshooting on golf courses. Petersen says he has had difficulty getting some of his clients, especially rich homeowners with 5 acres of property, to understand they don’t have to water their lawns daily to keep them lush and green.

“I can’t tell you how many service
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Off The Fringe Well-Taught

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS
LEARN FROM THE BEST AT
GREEN START ACADEMY

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

**John Deere's
Brad Aldridge
makes a point
during an outdoor
demonstration.**

Some day, when they look back on the Green Start Academy, the assistant superintendents who attended the event will realize what an honor it was to be there — if they haven't already.

Last month, about 50 assistant superintendents from across the country were selected to attend Green Start Academy, a two-day educational and networking event sponsored by John Deere Golf and Bayer Environmental Science held in Clayton, N.C., and Fuquay-Varina, N.C.

It's a dynamic program and assistant superintendents get to rub elbows with some of the movers and shakers in the golf course maintenance business. This year, attendees were treated to a Who's Who lineup of speakers. If this were Major League Baseball, this all-star lineup would win the World Series. It included Ken Mangum, certified golf course superintendent of the Atlanta (Ga.) Athletic Club, and Bruce Williams, director of business development in the West for ValleyCrest Golf Course Maintenance. Mangum and Williams are veterans in the business and call it like they see it.

One thing Mangum and Williams harped on to the assistants was the importance of getting themselves noticed in their quests to move up in their careers. "You can't be better than everyone else if you're doing the same thing," Mangum said.

Of course, there were questions for Mangum and Williams about the struggling economy and job security. "I think everybody is concerned about their jobs," Mangum said.

Stan Zontek, director of the Mid-Atlantic Region for the United States Golf Association's Green Section, talked about golf course trends. More courses are adding first-rate practice facilities to accommodate more golfers who don't have time to play 18 holes, said Zontek, who also spoke about golf course conditioning. While more people say con-

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PHOTO BY: LARRY AYLWARD

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calls I've been on where people tell me they have a water leak," Petersen says. "Then they tell me they're watering seven days a week. And I tell them, 'You don't have a water leak. You've saturated your ground so much that you think you have a water leak, but you don't.'"

The event, organized by Rain Bird's Jennifer Riley-Chetwynd, featured a screening of the finalists' films in front of a live audience.

"The filmmakers in this year's competition have genuinely expressed the importance of efficient, effective and responsible use of the Earth's most precious resource by using the creative and personal power of film in an original and compelling way," said Dave Johnson, Rain Bird's corporate marketing director. "Rain Bird strives to deliver an influential platform where filmmakers like these six finalists can raise awareness of the important issues surrounding water conservation so that others will be inspired and take their own personal action."

Pope also had a good word for Rain Bird, in addition to the filmmakers.

"Rain Bird sets an example of corporate progressiveness, which is just so vital at this time," she said. ■

WELL-TAUGHT *Continued from page 10*

ditioning has become too extreme, Zontek says he's fine with that. "People say to me, 'Stan, when will it end?' I hope it never ends because it's job security."

Speaking of which, the bet here is Thom Nikolai is secure in his job as turfgrass professor at Michigan State University. That's because the man can outright teach.

You know someone is a top-notch presenter when you can pay attention to him/her for almost two hours. That's Nikolai, who spoke on a variety of subjects, including green speed. "I don't think speed kills," Nikolai said when discussing green speed. "Speed doesn't kill — ignorance does."

While Nikolai was a hit, so was Nick Hamon, Ph.D., and director of development and technical service for Bayer Environmental Science, who gave a presentation on sustainable development. Hamon provided a fascinating presentation on what's coming to the industry in that regard.

The assistants also got to hear longtime John Deere engineer Ron Reichen present on, "Details of Bedknife/Reel Composition." As Matt Armbruster, John Deere Golf's marketing manager said when introducing Reichen, "Ron has forgotten more about this subject than I'll ever know." Reichen's the type anybody would want to listen to and learn from. ■



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