

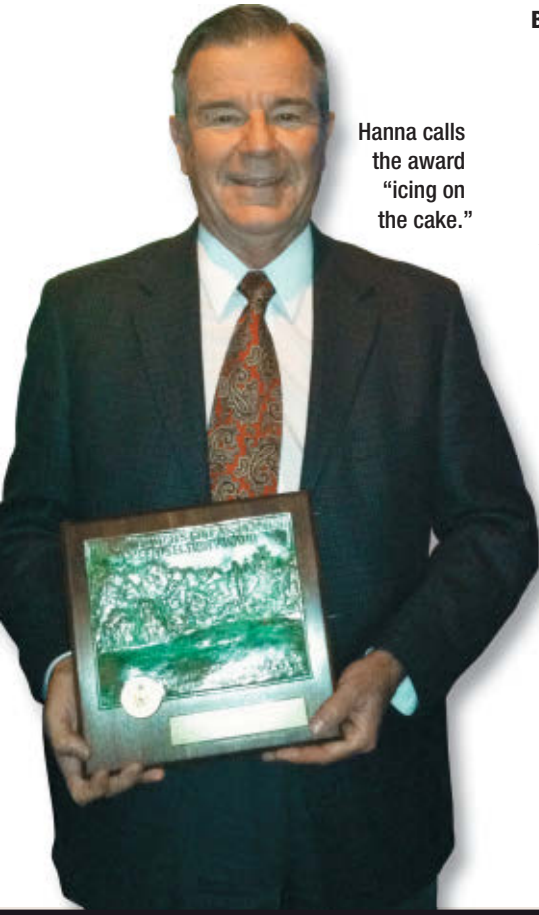
Off The Fringe

HANNA Garners Green Section Award

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, TIFTON SCIENTIST IS RECOGNIZED FOR HIS TURFGRASS CONTRIBUTIONS.

BY BETH GERACI

Hanna calls the award "icing on the cake."



Wayne Hanna, Ph.D., has worked as a turfgrass scientist at the University of Georgia, Tifton since 1971.

Today he's the latest recipient of the USGA Green Section Award.

The USGA Green Section presented Hanna with the award at the 2012 Golf Industry Show, citing his many contributions in developing environmentally friendly turfgrasses.

"It's nice getting paid for something that you enjoy doing so much," Hanna said in accepting the award. "It's been a joy working with the industry, all of you, and I appreciate the enjoyment that comes from being a servant of the taxpayer."

In introducing Hanna, USGA agronomist Patrick O'Brien recalled Hanna's many accomplishments in developing hybrid bermudagrasses over the last 40 years, including Tif-

Sport, TifEagle and TifGrand.

All of them "are industry standards used on golf courses," O'Brien said. "They have enhanced the enjoyment of millions of golfers, including those at USGA championships and at all levels of golf."

In return, Hanna credited the USGA Green Section for circuitously helping him revive the breeding program at UG Tifton back in 1983. Hanna had just presented about Tif-Dwarf at a USGA Green Section conference in Boca Raton, Fla. when a superintendent approached him.

"He said, 'You know, we need to start developing some bermudagrasses that have a putting surface similar to bentgrasses,'" Hanna recalled. "I thought it was a pretty good idea. So I went home and started reviving the bermudagrass breeding program at Tifton."

A native Texan, Hanna earned a Ph.D. in genetics from Texas A&M University. In 1971, he launched his long career as a research scientist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the University of Georgia.

The turfgrass breakthroughs Hanna made with Dr. Glenn Burton led Tifton to become known as the "bermudagrass capital of the world."

PHOTO BY: BETH GERACI; ILLUSTRATION: ISTOCK INTERNATIONAL INC.

**FAST
FACT**

Course **OPENINGS**
in 2011:

19

Source: National Golf Foundation

Course **CLOSINGS**
in 2011:

157.5



For the sixth consecutive year **more golf courses have closed than opened**. The number of closing in 2011 is the high water mark thus far.

358.5 courses have closed since the industry's peak in 2005.