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# Moment of Silence

The golfers walk up the fairway. And as they journey in search of their shots, there will be talk.

Small talk.

Big talk.

Trash talk.

There will be talk of business. Talk of terribly unimportant subjects.

And talk of the latest jokes.

But then one golfer finds his ball, buried in the shallow grave called the bunker. Buried under the lip.

And the golfer, noting this perfectly groomed patch of humility, is suddenly silent.

As he reflects on the death of his round.



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Respect for the course.

# Golfdom

OCTOBER 2008 • VOLUME 63 • NO. 10

With an affinity for the great outdoors, Joe Hubbard was born to be a golf course superintendent.

BY LARRY AYLWARD

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## Turfgrass Trends

This month, *Golfdom's* practical research digest discusses how simple IPM techniques can mitigate grub damage in the desert, among other topics. See pages 53-64.

## Online Exclusive

 See this only at [www.golfdom.com](http://www.golfdom.com):

► Allen James urged pesticide and fertilizer industry representatives to promote the safety of their products during his Sept. 3 address at the Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment's (RISE) meeting in Washington. See "Golfdom Video Podcast" at [www.golfdom.com](http://www.golfdom.com) for an excerpt of his speech.

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Superintendents overwhelmingly say economic policy drives their voting preferences.

By David Frabotta



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Times have changed for these 'old-time' superintendents, but they have no regrets about getting into the business.

By Ryan Graff

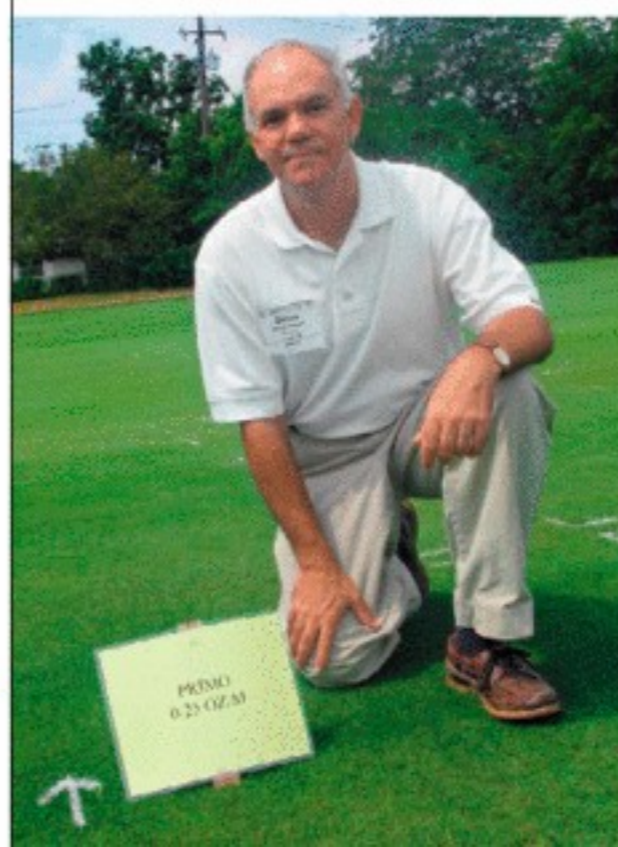
### About the cover

Larry Aylward photographed Joe Hubbard in all his glory – in the midst of a beautiful environmental setting on the Old Course at the Broken Sound Club.

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PGR has developed into a vital apparatus in superintendents' turf maintenance toolbox.

By Larry Aylward



Syngenta's Dennis Shepherd ►

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Lost dogs without tags usually end up being put to sleep at the shelter when they lose their way home. Even worse off are the dogs that never had homes to begin with. There aren't enough good homes for all the dogs out there, so have your dogs spayed or neutered, and do not allow them to breed! In America, 4 million cats and dogs are put down every year. That's far too many! If you want another dog, consider adoption instead.

**Bailey.** Her owner is Steve Hammon, superintendent at Traverse City Golf and Country Club in Traverse City, Mich. (Photo by: Steve Hammon)



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**T**he presidential election is only a few weeks away. Who will you vote for?

Barack Obama has pushed his aim-to-change message.

But are you concerned about Obama's inexperience to lead the country?

John McCain has announced his intent to get the country back on track. But speaking of inexperience, are you concerned about McCain's selection of Sarah Palin as his running mate?

I like Obama, but I don't know if he can change everything he wants to change. McCain is one tough SOB, but will he be too tough? Joe Biden seems like a viable vice presidential candidate. But is Sarah Palin? Yeah, she's a great speaker and has the ability to connect, but is that enough?

I recently returned from Washington, where RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) held its annual meeting. RISE's members include pesticide and fertilizer producers, suppliers and distributors for the golf course maintenance industry. To no surprise, most everybody was talking about the election.

There is definite concern about what could happen within the green industry if either candidate is elected, especially Obama. As one golf course superintendent put it so matter-of-factly recently, "A Republican president usually means fewer environmental regulations being initiated."

If that's the case, more environmental regulations are probably coming because Obama will most likely win the election. That prediction comes from David Crow, the president of DC Legislative & Regulatory Services, who spoke at the RISE meeting. Crow knows politics like Tiger knows getting up and down for par.

Crow says McCain will keep it close until the end, but Obama will win by 5 percent. Crow says he doesn't see "the energy, the spirit, the drive or the will of the Republican party" to match that of the Democratic party.

That's not all the bad news for the Republicans. Crow also expects the GOP will lose 20 to 25 seats in the House of Representatives and five to seven seats in the Senate.

The Democrats already control the House

## If Democrats Rule, What's Coming?

BY LARRY AYLWARD



HOPEFULLY,  
LEGISLATORS WILL  
NOT MAKE ANY RASH  
DECISIONS ABOUT  
BANNING PESTICIDES

and Senate, and the party will have even more clout if Crow's prediction is true. And if Obama is elected, the Democrats will have hit the trifecta. So much for vetoes.

Crow says he expects Obama's first 100 days will be an "absolute blitzkrieg" of bills involving climate change, environmental policy and energy issues. Apparently, Obama is a golfer, but a hack (he's like most of us!). Being a liberal, he probably doesn't prefer the perfection of some courses. It will be interesting to see if he brings an anti-pesticide mentality to the table. If he does, things could change in the golf course maintenance industry.

The good news is the specialty pesticide industry has a solid relationship with Debbie Edwards, director of the Environmental Protection Agency's office of pesticide programs. Edwards, whose position is not by appointment, has spoken at the past two RISE meetings. "I do believe — and it's clear — that pesticides have a real and important place in society in the United States," she has said.

Hopefully, the Democrats will look long and hard at any pesticides before making any rash decisions about banning them. Hopefully, they will see the effort — in terms of time and money spent on research and development — that the basic pesticide manufacturers have devoted to making pesticides safer. I've heard more than one university researcher comment on how amazed they are with the low toxicities of some of the new active ingredients in pesticides.

Of course, it's more imperative than ever that the golf course maintenance industry — from superintendents to pesticide manufacturers — let their voices be known on this topic. Tell anyone who will listen that you make and use pesticides responsibly.

This is no time to sit idly by.

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# The Big Picture

THE NUMBERS THAT SHAPE YOUR BUSINESS

## TIDBIT OF THE MONTH

### Activity in Arkansas



Several golf projects are underway in Arkansas. Among them is the new Links at Rainbow Curve in Bentonville, a nine-hole layout that will serve as the centerpiece of a new housing development backed by Lindsey Management Co. with about 500 multi-family units. Lindsey is also seeking approval for The Links at Fayetteville. Near Wynne, work continues on Village Creek State Park Golf Course, a 27-hole design by Andy Dye that's slated to open later this summer. For details on these and other golf projects around the United States, visit [www.golfconstructionnews.com](http://www.golfconstructionnews.com).

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### How Are You Managing the Demand for Faster Putting Greens?

- We're rolling them more often ..... 57%
- We're double cutting several times a week ..... 15%
- We continue to lower the height of cut ..... 15%
- We're telling golfers the greens are faster than they really are ..... 7%
- Other ..... 31%

*Golfdom survey based on 635 responses. Respondents could choose multiple answers.*

### Can't Buy Me . . . Job Happiness

Employees want more than money to keep them happy, according to [www.communityinvestmentnetwork.org](http://www.communityinvestmentnetwork.org), which states in study that intangibles such as respect and trust are major motivators to do a good job. Here are the eight key factors that influence happiness-at-work factors:

1. Appreciation
2. Respect
3. Trust
4. Individual growth
5. Good boss
6. Compatible co-workers
7. Compatible culture
8. A sense of purpose

## Golf Rounds Played

The percentages below represent the change in the number of rounds played in July 2008 compared to the number of rounds played in July 2007.

REGION	JULY	Y.T.D.
<b>New England</b> ME, VT, NH, MA, RI, CT	2.0%	5.0%
<b>Middle Atlantic</b> NY, PA, NJ	-3.0%	0.0%
<b>East North Central</b> MI, OH, IN, IL, WI	1.4%	-4.7%
<b>West North Central</b> ND, MN, SD, NE, KS, IA, MO	-1.4%	-7.8%
<b>South Atlantic</b> WV, DE, MD, VA, NC, SC, GA	-5.1%	-1.9%
<b>Florida</b>	-5.6%	-0.7%
<b>South Central</b> KY, TN, AL, MS, OK, AR, LA	5.5%	3.9%
<b>Texas</b>	22.7%	12.4%
<b>Mountain</b> MT, ID, WY, NV, UT, CO, AZ, NM	1.9%	-2.0%
<b>Pacific</b> WA, OR, AK, HI	5.4%	-0.2%
<b>California</b>	3.1%	-0.6%
<b>TOTAL UNITED STATES</b>	0.5%	-1.5%

SOURCE: GOLF DATATECH

## Budgets Gone Awry

Unexpected sharp increases in fuel prices and other costs have caught golf course superintendents off guard. *Golfdom* recently asked superintendents: How much have price hikes impacted your 2008 maintenance budget?

*(Based on 80 responses to an online survey)*

- I'm over budget more than 10% **10%**
- I'm over 5% to 10% **18%**
- I'm over less than 5% **21%**
- I'm still within my budget without cutting maintenance **23%**
- I'm within budget because I'm cutting back on maintenance **29%**