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Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Flat as a Pancake in Kansas

Golf rounds came in at 0.0 percent for July. That's right, golf rounds were neither up or down for the month when compared with July 2008. Breaking it down, public courses were up slightly (0.1 percent) and private courses were down slightly (0.4 percent), according to Golf Datatech. The findings represent 4,025 reporting courses.

For the year, rounds are up 0.2 percent — probably better than most people expected.

Andersons Appoints Bandy, Black

Maumee, Ohio-based Andersons Golf Products announced two significant changes in its regulatory, technical and marketing departments. Marketing Manager Mike Bandy is filling a new role of technical services manager, in charge of product development, regulatory and product management. Tasha Hussain Black will fill the new marketing development manager position to support the professional turf, consumer, industrial and cob sales units.

The Andersons said the changes are being made to better meet its resource needs related to the increasing regulatory scrutiny surrounding the green industry, as well as increased activity related to the \$5 million Ohio's Third Frontier Research and Commercialization grant, which the company was awarded for the advancement of granular technology.

Black is currently vice president of technology for the Regional Growth Partnership (RGP) and director of Launch, a business-assistance program focused on supporting tech-based start-up companies in northwest Ohio.

Briefs continue on page 15



Dave Shetlar makes his point.

The BugDoc Gets Antsy

NOBODY CAN TELL A STORY ABOUT INSECT CONTROL LIKE OHIO STATE'S SHETLAR

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

Nobody in the golf course maintenance world — make that the world — can talk more eloquently about insect control than Dave Shetlar, professor of urban landscape entomology at the Ohio State University and known as The BugDoc.

In August, I attended the 2009 Turfgrass Research Field Day at Ohio State. The event, sponsored in part by the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation, reports on research findings in various capacities, especially in the use of pesticide trials. Shetlar's presentation was titled, "Control of the Turfgrass Ant, *Lasius neoniger*, on Ohio Golf Courses." OK, at first glance, maybe such topics don't have

a lot of bite, no pun intended. But when Shetlar's waxing about them, they come to life.

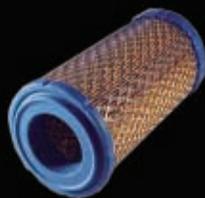
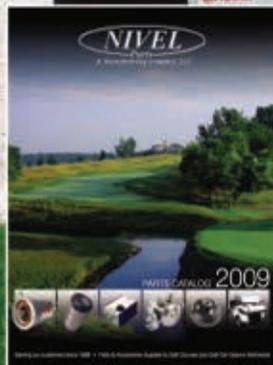
"If you haven't had them," Shetlar said of the turfgrass ant, "then you're probably lying or applying way too many pesticides."

The turfgrass ant is one of the most common inhabitants of turfgrass in the northeastern U.S., Shetlar said. The ants build mounds on greens and tees, which can kill shortly cut turf, interfere with play and dull mower blades. You can apply insecticides with short residual activity and kill foraging worker ants on the surface, but this would only stop mounding activity for a few weeks because the colony survives,

Continued on page 18

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Off The Fringe

Tune Your Turf With iTunes

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA RESEARCHERS CREATE IPHONE APPLICATION FOR TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT

By Curt Harler

It'll come as music to a superintendent's ears that there's agronomic help available via iTunes and iPhone.

University of Georgia researchers have created an iPhone application for turfgrass management. It's available like any other iTunes application and can be used worldwide, anywhere turf is grown. "This works across the board: warm-season grasses, cool-season grasses," says Patrick E. McCullough, extension turf weed scientist at UGA-Griffin. "It's designed to be a universal turf management tool."

The app was finished in mid-August and was recently put up for sale

on iTunes. It's also available for BlackBerry phones.

The application contains pictures, information, and recommendations for turf, and turf diseases, weeds and insects. "We're also creating a database on this program for superintendents to search for fungicides, insecticides or herbicides by common name and trade name to access information about rates, labeled turfgrasses and pests controlled," McCullough says. "I believe this program represents a new technology for superintendents to access information through mobile devices, and we would like to begin presenting this to the industry."

McCullough started the project in

April, aiming to provide access to turfgrass information. It just became logical to expand it to weeds, insects and diseases. "Now it's like a turf textbook — universal, all inclusive," he says.

However, all the superintendent takes to the field is an iPhone or iPod, not a 10-pound textbook. Right now, the application consumes just a tiny amount of space on an iPhone, although a complete download would be larger.

Walk onto a golf course with McCullough and spot a weed. First guess is that it's goosegrass. To confirm, simply click the appropriate category (weeds) and search for goosegrass. The application delivers several photos of the weed — including a shot of the

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WHITE METAL

Broadleaf weeds can come to your iPod.

whole plant and close-ups of the leaf, ligules, seed-head and similar keys.

Confirming it is goosegrass is simple. What to do about it? The application's database lists herbicides, fungicides and insecticides by active ingredient and trade name.

Not even sure what weed you're looking at? Search the database by grasses versus broadleaves and you'll soon be where you need to be.

One cool thing about the technology is a superintendent can upload as many photos or as much text as he wants, McCullough notes. There's no limit to the cost of color photos or pages of material. Since recommended pesticides and suggested rates vary by state, there are no specific "ounces per thousand"



recommendations. However, the idea is to get the superintendent going in the right direction.

Next addition to the database will be turf diseases, then insects. Alfredo Martinez, UGA turf pathologist;

Will Hudson, entomologist; and Clint Waltz, extension turfgrass management specialist, are working with McCullough on the project.

It's available for \$19.95. However, as the database is expanded and updated, UGA likely will take advantage of the subscription service iTunes Store is rolling out. For a small monthly fee, superintendents will have access to the latest info. Proceeds from the sale of the app go back into UGA turf research. ■

Business briefs

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Becker Underwood Makes Organizational Changes

Ames, Iowa-based Becker Underwood, an international developer, marketer and producer of bio-agronomic and specialty products, announced organizational changes in its North American operations that will better organize and coordinate staff in serving a growing client portfolio, said CEO Peter Innes. There were no staff reductions and staffing additions are anticipated.

Innes said Becker Underwood aims to identify new opportunities and commit resources needed to turn ideas into products that deliver value to those who help market them and those who use them. With that in mind, the company realigned its North American marketing, sales, product management, customer service and manufacturing teams to take advantage of these opportunities.

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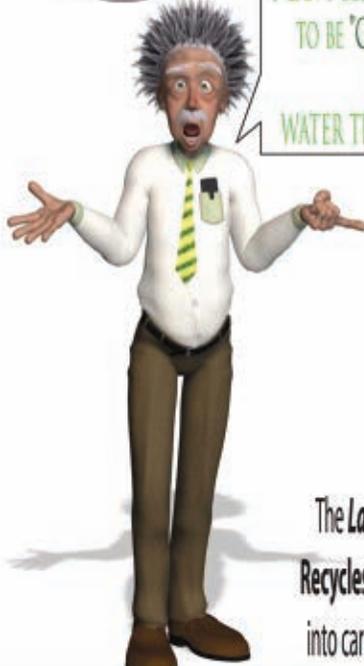


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“Quotable

“I hope that I have made a difference. I hope that people may say that ‘Bill you were worth it. You have made the game better.’ I hope that all the sacrifices that I put my family through were worth it.”

— William J. (Bill) Powell, designer and owner of Clearview Golf Club in East Canton, Ohio, after receiving the 2009 PGA Distinguished Service Award in August.

“Complaints from golfers can be course managers’ best opportunity to win golfers for life at their courses. If you can show your customers they’re important to you by addressing their problems, you can turn an upset customer into a great word-of-mouth marketer for you.”

— Todd Ingraham, owner of Bunker Hill Golf Course in Medina, Ohio, on turning a negative situation into a positive one.

“We have young people from California who say if it wasn’t for The First Tee, they would be in gangs. We’re saving lives and changing lives.”

— Joe Louis Barrow Jr., CEO of The First Tee, discussing the program’s impact.

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Today's Challenges... Tomorrow's Opportunities.

Briefs continued from page 15

Paul Holliday assumes the position of director of marketing, sales and operations for North America. He now leads a consolidated U.S. business including inoculants, seed enhancements, and horticultural and specialty products, and he will continue to head all Canadian operations. Other new assignments, who now report to Holliday, include: Cozette Hadley, who assumes the newly created position of horticulture and specialty products sales manager for the United States, and Bill Romp, who fills the new position of strategic accounts lead.

Newly merged inoculants and seed enhancements sales teams now operate under the direction of Steve Bergschneider (Northern regional sales manager) and Glen Wiggins (Eastern and Southern regional sales manager). Charlie Hale now leads a newly formed marketing team including product managers and customer service personnel as well as communication and package design functions. Chris Feiden, head of operations for the company's St. Joseph, Mo., production facility, now also heads operations at the company's Seedbiotics facility in Caldwell, Idaho.

Target Event Raises \$52,000

One hundred and forty-four golfers turned out for Target Specialty Products' 10th annual Charity Golf Tournament in July at Tustin Ranch Golf Club in Tustin, Calif. The event raised more than \$52,000 for the American Cancer Society.

The tournament was dedicated to the memory of Curtis Orrben, former national sales manager for DuPont, who lost his battle to cancer in November 2008. The event also celebrated the lives of cancer survivors Julie Hooper of Speckoz; Buzz Rasmussen of H.R. Packaging; and Pastor Tom Brashears, of Red Hill Lutheran Church in Santa Ana, Calif.

The tournament's Malcolm Stack Award went to Bryan Houtchens, Chad Powell, Steve Sellers and Matt Bellsmith. The award, named in honor of the late Malcolm Stack, former president and founder of Bell Laboratories Inc., goes to the foursome with the low gross. Since it began in 2000, the tournament has raised more than \$397,000 for the American Cancer Society. ■



DEEP THOUGHTS

WITH Rick Slattery

A Time for Superintendents and Others to be **Resourceful**, **Visionary** and **Creative**

Editor's note: Rick Slattery, longtime superintendent of Locust Hill Country Club in Rochester, N.Y., is an astute person who not only keeps up with the latest in golf course maintenance agronomics, but is well-versed in what's going on in his world, from politics to the economy to world events. *Golfdom* asked Slattery, who is on the magazine's editorial advisory board, to share some of his thoughts with readers. Slattery's column will run randomly in *Golfdom*.

The definition of an environmentalist is vague, and includes anyone who might donate to an environmental fund or drive a fuel-efficient car. Then you have those who theorize that environmentalists will strangle our freedom and claim their doctrine is at odds with the basic economics of wealth and value creation. Nonetheless, environmentalism is largely influenced by political trends, societal awareness, favorable science and long-term global consequences.

So the question to ask ourselves as golf course superintendents is: How are we doing on these fronts, and are we doing enough?

The tipping point for us is our image to society. We have come a long way from the days of "Silent Spring" in the 1960s, when all educators labeled all chemical use as bad. There will always be people on the extremes of any opinion — we can't prevent that — but I think we can agree there has been significant progress in regards to the image of chemical use through the years. We must continue to support organizations like the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's Environmental Institute for Golf and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, which have had measurable success with gathering and disseminating information to media outlets and educators. Communication and education will continue to be the cornerstone to our future success, and like a drumbeat will remain a constant theme forever.

The challenges ahead will require us to look beyond the next generation. We live in a different world than we did just a few years ago, and it's going to be a different world in the future. The economy will recover, but for now it's on reset and will not be returning to what we had before. This is about our future and future generations. We must react by being resourceful, creative and visionary. ■

Golfdom would like to hear your deep thoughts on Slattery's view. Just send an e-mail to info@golfdom.com.

Off The Fringe

BUGDOC *Continued from page 12*
Shetlar said. The key, he added, is to kill the queen, the colony and the brood (larvae).

But you have to have an insecticide to get at the colony, where they're feeding underground. Let Shetlar explain, as only he can.

"The ants store food in their nests.

They do it in a very interesting manner. They don't just store food; they use living cupboards, which are called replete ants. These ants say to the other ants, 'Just keep bringing me food.' And [the replete ants] keep swelling up. They sit there and just get fat. They become the community stomach. So when there's a shortage

of food or the ants can't get food, the workers come up to the replete ants and say, 'Hey remember all that food I gave you? Cough it up.' Then the replete ants go 'blop' and spit up the food and feed the colony."

Amazingly, the ants can go up to four months in the fall and winter living off the replete ants, Shetlar said. Hence, another insecticide is needed to control them, rather than one with a short residual activity.

"We're beginning to adopt the same strategies the pest control industry has adopted [to control ants]," Shetlar says. "The pest control industry

"The worker ants come up to the replete ants and say, 'Hey, remember all that food I gave you? Cough it up.'"

has always had this mantra — if you're going to kill an ant colony, you have to kill the queen. We need to get an insecticide into the colony, get it the workers and then to the queen. What we're talking about is colony elimination, not ant activity elimination."

Shetlar says recent control tests using neonicotinoid insecticides show significant reductions in mounding activity five to eight weeks after application, which suggests the insecticides are either reducing food sources or they're slowing acting within the colony to kill the brood and or/queen. A fall application appears to reduce colony activity significantly the following season, he adds.

"This is true colony elimination," Shetlar says. "You're not just fooling around with the workers on the surface."

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