



# The Industry's First Virtual Trade Show!

May 11-13, 2010



**Attention: Superintendents, Assistants, Maintenance Technicians**

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- 1 Participate in the comfort of your own office or home.** All you need to enter the trade show is your Internet-enabled computer.
- 2 There is no charge to attend.** Yes, its true. Entering the trade show is completely FREE! All you have to do is register.
- 3 Access to leading suppliers in one place.** Leading suppliers like Toro, Jacobsen and John Deere Golf among others will be showcasing their equipment, products and services for golf courses.
- 4 Educational opportunity like no other.** The Virtual Trade Show features 3D booths where supplier distribute product information, display videos, offer demonstrations, conduct meetings and engage in discussions via email and chat tools.
- 5 Event is live for 3 days and archived for 90 days.** We recommend attending May 11-13 to take advantage of live chat and other interactive features. But if your schedule doesn't permit, you have a full 90 days to attend as often as you'd like.

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IGCEMA is The International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association

## Da 'Big' Show

*Continued from page 10*

penned the same-named rags-to-riches autobiography on which the 2006 blockbuster was based.

Delivering the keynote address at the GIS Feb. 11, Gardner took conference-goers on an emotional ride — with a crowd of thousands roaring with laughter one minute and solemnly reflecting the next. Gardner says his autobiography strikes a reverberating chord because it reaches out to every dad who also has to be a mom, every mom who also has to be a dad, and everyone who refuses to let his dream drift away. It was a best seller for nine straight weeks.

Gardner took GIS attendees on his journey — from the streets of San Francisco to Wall Street stockbroker to the New York Times Best Seller list to the silver screen — with Will Smith and his son Jaden playing Gardner and his son Christopher Jr.

Gardner — now a multimillionaire and CEO of Gardner Rich LLC, a Chicago-based brokerage firm — says the most important thing he's done in his life is be there for his son and daughter, Jacintha. And they, in turn, are always here for him, teaching Gardner as much as he's passed on to them.

"I'll never forget the one day during all of this hoopla that my daughter really put me in my place," Gardner recalls. "Will Smith's name had just come up as the perfect actor to play me in the movie. Don't get me wrong. I love Will Smith. I'm a big fan of his music and movies. But when I think of Will Smith, I think 'blockbuster' and 'outer space.' My book of memoirs was all about inner space.

"When I shared my doubts with Jacintha, she turned to me and said, 'Poppa, Will Smith played Muhammad Ali. ... If he can play Muhammad Ali, he can play you!'"

### One awesome hound!

Milly, 1-year-old blue Weimaraner owned by Kyle Erdige, golf course

Illinois superintendent Dan Dinelli (center) is flanked by Derek Settle (left) and Keith Rincker of the Chicago District Golf Association during a boat cruise of the San Diego harbor sponsored by Valent Professional Products.



superintendent at Hickory Hill in Oneida, N.Y., was selected Dog of the Year during the show. The seventh-annual Dog of the Year contest was sponsored by LebanonTurf. Voting was conducted among superintendents and others at the show. Milly was chosen from among dogs that appeared in LebanonTurf's 2010 Dog Days of Golf Calendar. In recognition of the honor, LebanonTurf will donate \$3,000 to the Central New York Superintendents Association and \$500 to Erdige.

### Extrovert or introvert?

Effective leadership is critical in any business operation. But what type of personality is required to be most effective? Is an extrovert better than an introvert to head a golf course maintenance crew or entire golf facility? What about the personalities of a superintendent, pro and general manager and how they mesh?

During the first general session at the Golf Industry Show, Brian Little, Ph.D., distinguished research professor emeritus at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, shed some light on the subject of personalities. He started

by asking attendees to rate themselves — on a scale of one through 10, with one being extremely introverted and 10 being extremely extroverted — on 10 personality traits:

- Are you outgoing?
- Are you easily bored?
- Are you optimistic or pessimistic?
- Are you thick- or thin-skinned?
- Are you blunt and straightforward or diplomatically sensitive?
- Do you have a need for excitement?
- Are you a fast-paced person?
- Do you have a high need for social contact?
- Are you spontaneous?
- Are you an introvert or extrovert?

People's scores regarding these 10 traits are a measure of how extroverted they are. Scoring a 54 or less is introverted; 55 to 59 means you may go in either direction; and 60 or higher is extroverted.

Little elaborated about the traits of extroverts and introverts. Extroverts tend to get speeding tickets because of the enthusiasm in which they drive. Introverts tend to do better in school.

The bottom line is both personality types are needed for successful management, Little said.

### Bacon, eggs and bad news

It was a good thing Jim Skillings spoke after attendees of the RISE Industry Issues Breakfast finished eating their breakfast. If Skillings spoke beforehand, he would've ruined their appetites. As is, he gave attendees indigestion.

*Continued on page 14*

# TARGET TOUGH WEEDS



GROUND IVY

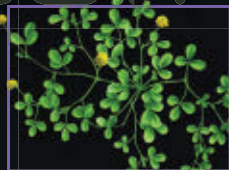
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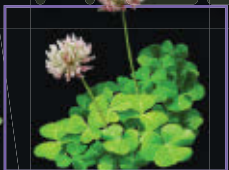
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## Da 'Big' Show

*Continued from page 12*

That's because RISE's Skillings updated attendees with a list of proposed regulations that have the potential to impact the golf course industry. Skillings said RISE has been "sitting on pins and needles waiting for something bad to happen" ever since President Obama took office and the Democrats gained control over both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue.

"And on Oct. 1, something bad happened," Skillings said. "And it has been something bad happening every day since Oct. 1."

That day, the Environmental Protection Agency announced that the public will now be able to review and comment on the risk assessments and proposed registration decisions for new pesticides. But Skillings said the policy violates a federal statute.

"We brought that to [the EPA's] attention, but they don't seem to be concerned about the fact that they're violating federal law," Skillings said.

Skillings also spoke of the EPA's aim to produce water-quality benchmarks for pesticides and pesticide discharge management, among other issues.

Halfway through is talk, Skillings said to the crowd, "You look depressed."

If some of the discussed regulatory issues are passed, superintendents will get busier with a lot more paperwork and have a lot more pressure on them, Skillings added.

### **Pinehurst in transition**

Bob Farren, certified superintendent and director of golf course and grounds management at Pinehurst Resort and Country Club, spoke on (betcha can't say this three times real fast) "Transitioning from Traditional Practices to Sustainable Standards and Practices" during the "You Asked For It ... You Got It! Seminar."

Farren says Pinehurst has reduced the number of highly maintained acres on its eight courses by 10 percent, resulting in a 16-percent fuel savings.

Farren talked about the 1990s when golf was growing and going over the top with conditioning. Since then, there has been an obsession to have finely groomed bunkers and distinctive mowing patterns, among other artificial enhancements.

"We have a near-zero tolerance for natural debris in wooded areas," Farren said. "We try to catch pine cones at Pinehurst on the first bounce. Is this sustainable in the future?"

Farren said sustainability is made up of three key elements, which he calls the three 3 p's: the people element; the planet element and the profit element. "Each of these elements must be part of the critical path of the decision-making process that will lead us to sustainability," he added.

Farren told attendees that Pinehurst's famed No. 2 course will be restored by Ben Crenshaw and Bill Coore "to re-establish a more natural feel and playability of the course."

### **Nik at Night?**

If Thom Nikolai weren't such an excellent turfgrass professor, he'd be hosting his own late-night TV show. People love listening to Michigan State University's Nikolai, who also spoke during the "You Asked For It ... You Got It" session.

The audience loved Nikolai's bit on the difficulties associated with getting golfers to lower their expectations on conditioning. Nikolai told attendees he went to an expensive restaurant the night before and ordered a \$60 steak cooked medium-rare. When the waitress delivered his meal, Nikolai cut into the steak and discovered it was cooked well done. When the waitress asked him how his steak was, Nikolai told her it was overcooked. And then he said she told him, "Well, you just have



We asked Kevin Butler, a vice president of sales for UgMO and former Chicago Bears kicker, to fake a field goal at the company's booth. That's UgMO's Carmen Magro holding a soil sensor that Butler's pretending to lay into with his right foot. By the way, Butler was sporting his Bears' 1986 Super Bowl ring.

to lower your expectations."

The entire story was fabricated (we think), but Nikolai made his point!

### **Goodbye to the CMAA**

It was not a memorable swan song for the Club Managers Association of America, which is leaving the GIS after three years. It was a little weird to see the CMAA vendors so segregated from the rest of the show — upstairs by the GCSAA bookstore and merchandise areas. It was like breaking up with your girlfriend, but both of you had to attend the same wedding — only she had a much worse table and not as many people went to see her.

The CMAA didn't seem to leave much of a mark on the GIS Show in its three years. ■

*Larry Aylward, Marty Whitford, John Walsh and Christopher S. Gray contributed to this report.*



# WE'RE 28 OVER PAR

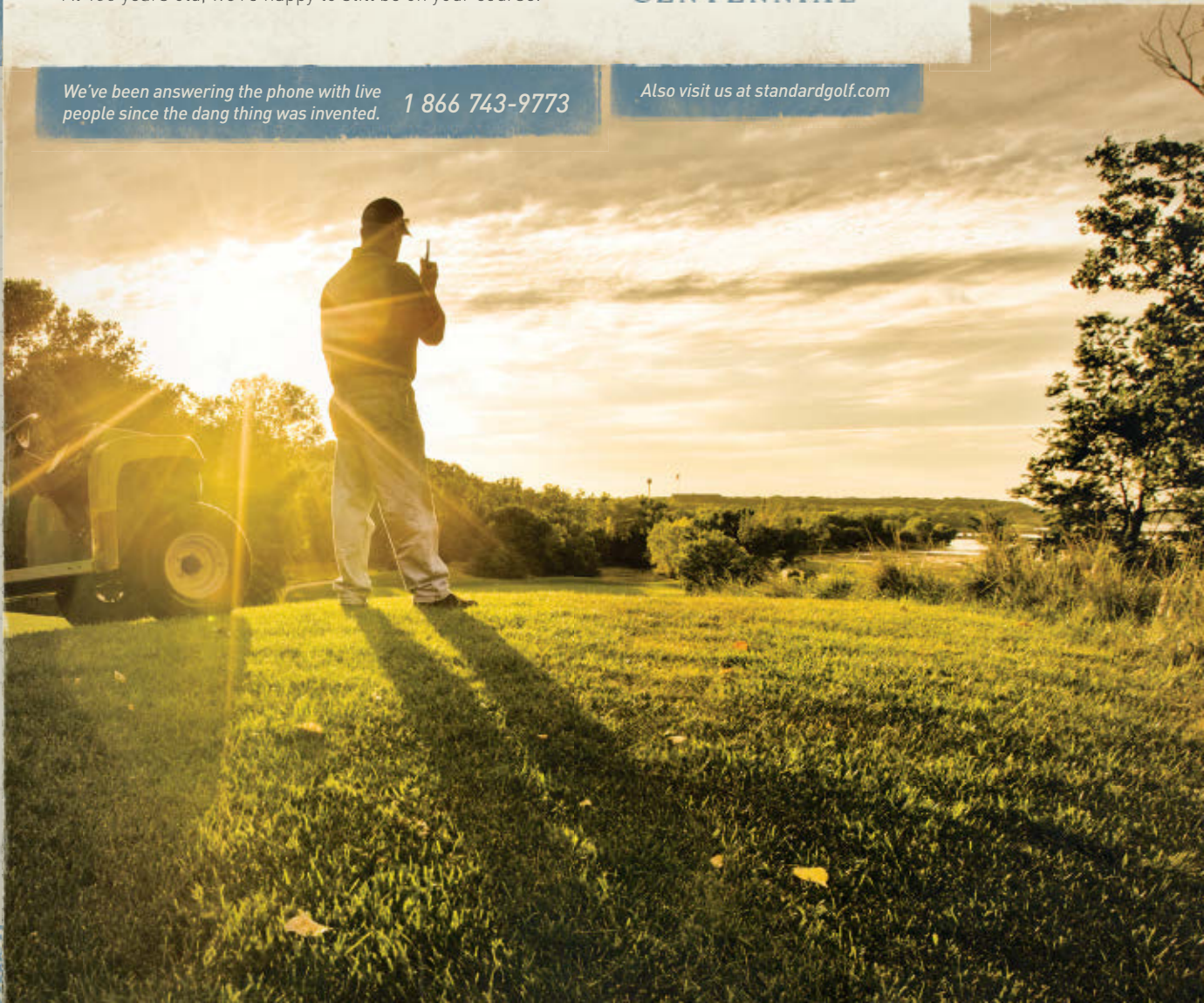
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# Hole of the Month

HOLE NO.

**3**

LAKEMONT COURSE,  
STONE MOUNTAIN GOLF CLUB  
▶ STONE MOUNTAIN, GA.

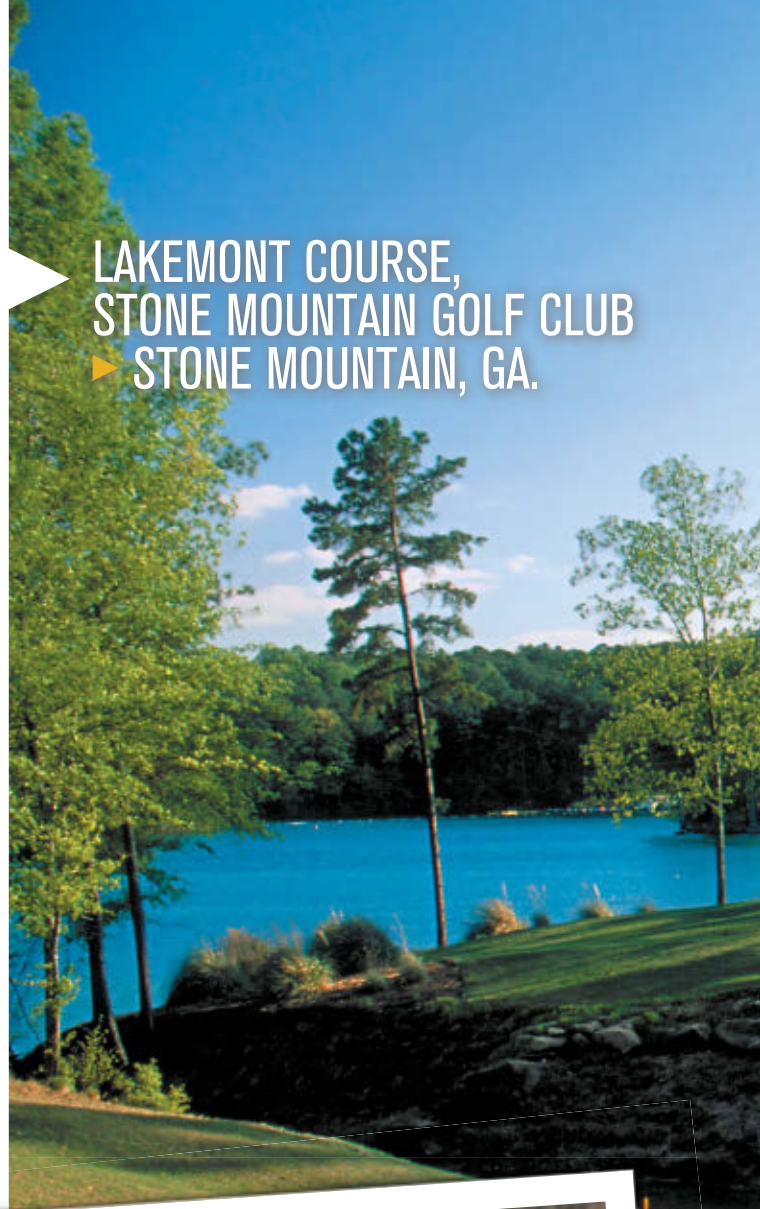
Just minutes outside the hustle and bustle of downtown Atlanta, you'll discover 3,200 acres of breathtaking natural terrain known as Stone Mountain Park. Visitors from across the country come in search of an outdoor family adventure, while golfers come in search of something else – the renowned Stone Mountain Golf Club.

Conceived by Georgia native John LaFoy, the course has received numerous marks of distinction for both its design and environmental stewardship. And this past year, hole No. 3 was recognized by the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* as one of Atlanta's "Dream 18" Public Golf Holes. This medium-length par-4 offers a spectacular view (and a spectacular challenge) courtesy of Stone Mountain Lake. And for a soundtrack, golfers are treated to the 732 bells of the "Carillon," a bell tower once exhibited at the 1964 World's Fair, which rings out three times daily.

Certified Golf Course Superintendent Anthony Williams, the club's Director of Grounds, has won numerous awards for his outstanding care of the course and consideration for the natural splendor surrounding it, including three consecutive GCSAA Environmental Leader in Golf Awards. When it comes to protecting his course, Williams turns to Echelon® herbicide from FMC, formulated to combine preemergence and early postemergence crabgrass and goosegrass control with broadleaf suppression and more than 100 days of preemergence sedge control.

"Echelon is simply a great product," says Williams. "It's amazing for preemergence control of nutsedge. I like the foliar spray for small areas, but I also had a custom-blended granular fertilizer with Echelon made last spring and had great results. Single or split application, Echelon is a versatile product that really delivers."

Because it reduces the need for follow-up applications, Echelon is the perfect complement to the Stone Mountain Golf Club's eco-conscious course management. And like the chiming of the "Carillon," that's music to Anthony Williams' ears.



Anthony Williams, Director of Grounds

## HOLE STATS

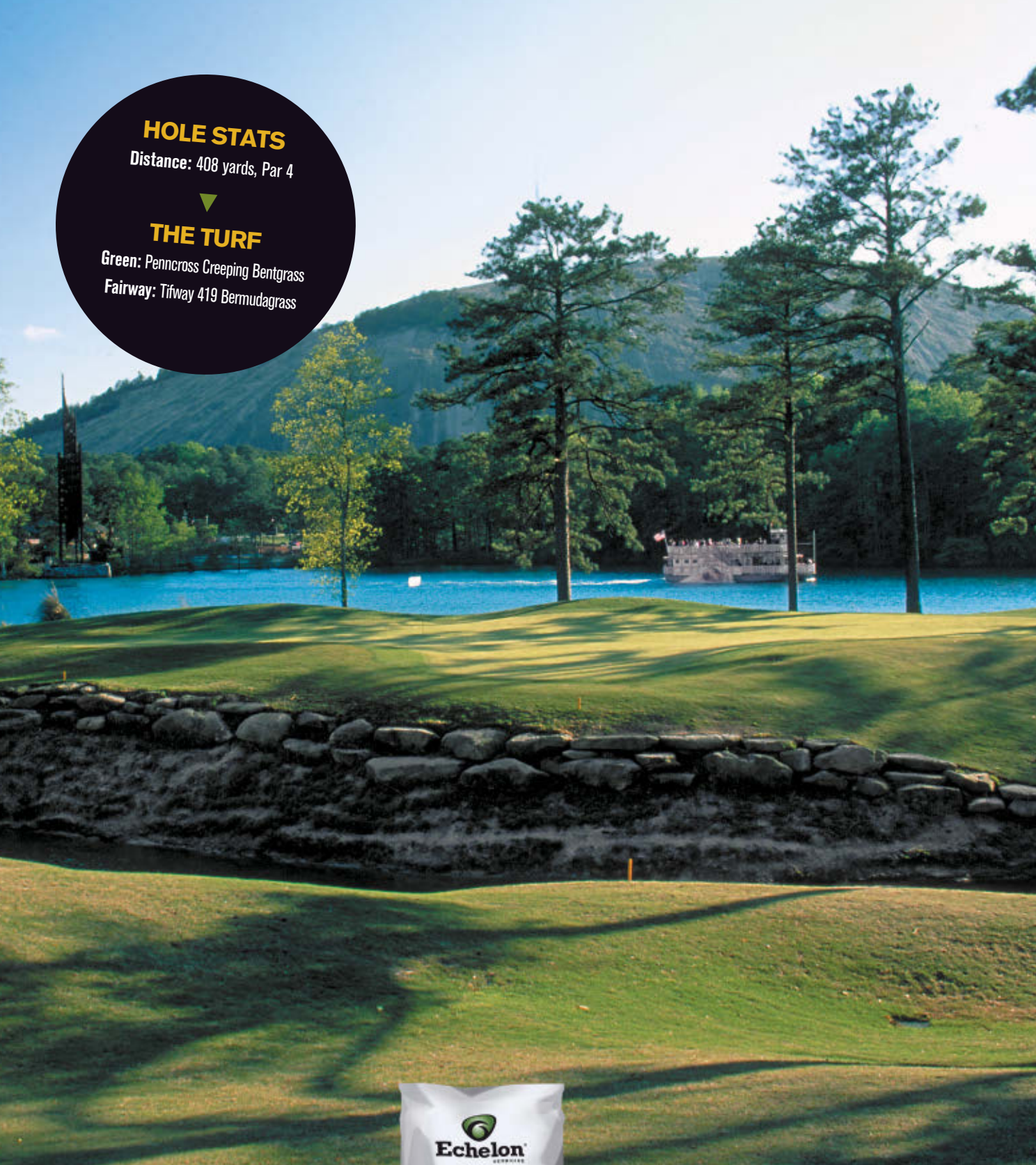
Distance: 408 yards, Par 4



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Fairway: Tifway 419 Bermudagrass



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GOLFDOM'S HOLE OF THE MONTH IS MADE POSSIBLE BY:

# FMC



For many *Golfdom* readers, 2009 was the toughest year they've ever endured in the business. But those same readers remain hopeful for 2010 and beyond

# PRESSING On

BY LARRY AYLWARD, EDITOR IN CHIEF



**S**o how many times were you ready to push the panic button in 2009? How many times were you ready to pack it in on this lousy economy and pack a light suitcase to head to some remote island in the South Pacific and live off the land for a few years?

I don't know about you, but Tom Hanks in "Castaway" didn't sound so bad at certain dreadful points last year, like on March 8 when the Dow Jones industrial average tumbled to 6,547, its lowest point since April 15, 1997. That day, my finger came about the length of a golf tee from pushing the panic button.

But I refrained from pressing it. So did many of you. At times in 2009, we all found ourselves in a frenzy over the financial state of our world, including, closer to home, the golf course industry economy.

I'm sure most of us are happy that 2009 is in our rearview mirror. We're flooring the gas pedal to get away from it as fast as we can.

Which brings us to 2010. According to a recent survey of nearly 600 *Golfdom* readers, mostly golf course superintendents, many of you are optimistic about 2010, despite 53 percent of you saying 2009 was "the most difficult year your course has been through from an economic standpoint."

We asked you: How optimistic are you about the economic health of your facility in 2010? Twenty-seven

percent of you answered "very optimistic" and 37 percent answered "kind of pessimistic." Last year, when we asked the same question for 2009, the numbers were 22 percent for "very optimistic" and 34 percent for "kind of pessimistic." That's an 8 percent increase on the optimistic side.

Only 2 percent of readers answered "very pessimistic" and 10 percent "kind of pessimistic" when asked the question. Those numbers are also down from last year. It should be noted that 24 percent of respondents answered "neutral" to the question.

This is good news — I'd say *exceedingly* good news — when you consider the economic debacle we've been through, harshly known as the Great Recession. Ask most any veteran golf industry insider, and he or she will tell you that 2009 was the worst state they've ever seen the economy.

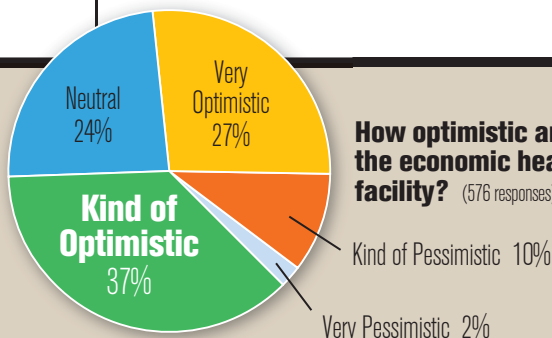
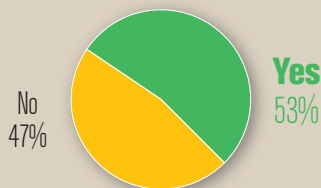
But despite increased optimism, nobody is singing "Happy Days Are Here Again" in the golf industry. There's still concern about 2010. But from a general standpoint, the golf industry hasn't been pummeled economically like some industries have.

Rounds were down only 0.6 percent in 2009 when compared to 2008, according to Golf Datatech. Revenues were down anywhere from 5 percent to 7 percent, according to various sources, which isn't bad when you consider some enterprises were down 20 percent to 30 percent.

Of course, we've heard time and again that

*Continued on page 20*

**Was 2009 the most difficult year your course has ever been through from an economic standpoint?** (568 responses)

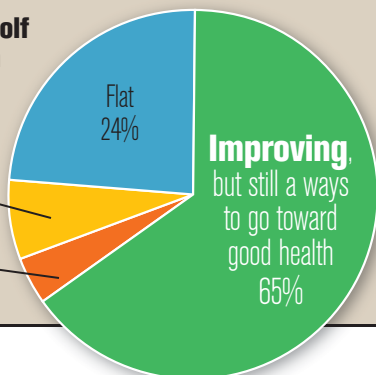


**How optimistic are you about the economic health of your facility?** (576 responses)

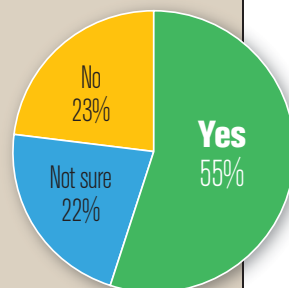
**Where do you think the golf course industry will be in five years?** (574 responses)

Very healthy, with increased rounds and revenues 7%

Worse off than it is now 4%



**Are you worried that negative consumer confidence will continue to hamper golf course rounds and revenue in 2009?** (577 responses)



Source: *Golfdom Survey*



## Debunking the Chicken Little Mentality

The sky is not falling on the golf industry, NGF's Nathan says

By John Walsh,  
Contributing Editor

Everyone knows the golf business is suffering. It's a difficult time, to say the least. However, Greg Nathan, vice president of the National Golf Foundation, said it's not as drastic as many say. He gave a presentation about the state of the industry on the trade show floor at the Golf Industry Show in San Diego last month. The numbers he cited backed a more tempered message.

In general, golf market intelligence, which NGF provides its members, helps keep

operators ahead of the curve.

"We measure what matters," Nathan says. "Operators use this information to make smarter decisions about their business."

That information starts with the basics. There are 28.6 million golfers, 16.6 million of which are core golfers, who are defined as those playing eight rounds or more a year. And the number of core golfers, who play 80 percent of the rounds and spend 80 percent of the money in the market, has been stable since 2000, according to Nathan. Yet, with the overall population growth, NGF hopes the

number of core golfers will increase, too.

The number of rounds per golfer hasn't changed that much, Nathan says, citing 578.4 million rounds played in 2000 and 488.1 million (estimated) played in 2009.

"It's a great time to be a golfer because there are a number of quality options for a good price," he says.

There are about 16,000 golf courses in the United States, one-quarter of which were built during the 1990s. But the building boom is over. In 2009, there were 49.5 openings (18-hole equivalents) and 139.5 closings.

Closings tallied 106 in 2008, 121.5 in 2007 and 146 in 2006. There also were 30 conversions from public to private, and 96 from private to public, adding 66 more golf courses to the public supply. During the past four years, net growth has been negative: minus 90 in 2009, minus 34 in 2008, minus 8.5 in 2007 and minus 26.5 in 2006.

Interestingly, there are about the same number of private clubs now as there were in the late 1920s. And since 1990, supply grew 34 percent while demand grew only 8 percent, which is causing stress as a result of the supply/demand imbalance. ■

*Continued from page 19*

consumer spending, which helped get us into these dark times, will help get us out of them. That said, 55 percent of our readers are worried that negative consumer confidence will continue to hamper golf rounds and revenue in 2010.

In such difficult times, I like to speak to the golf industry veterans — the people who have been through the economic downturns and have refrained from pushing the panic buttons — to get their views on the subject and how to cope with it. One of those people is certified superintendent Dennis Lyon, manager of golf for the City of Aurora's (Colo.) Golf Division, who oversees seven courses and has been a superintendent since 1973. Lyon has seen good times and bad.

**Dennis Lyon** MANAGER OF GOLF,  
CITY OF AURORA'S (COLO.) GOLF DIVISION

*"We've always managed on the edge to be as efficient as possible. But when you cut beyond that, you have impacts on the other side."*



"The pendulum swings back and forth," he says matter of factly.

But Lyon says the Great Recession was the deepest economic hole he has ever seen the country get itself in. "And it may take longer to come out of, but we will come out of it," he adds.

While Lyon didn't push the panic button, he did hit the brakes when it came to maintenance spending. Lyon usually buys 60 new golf cars a year for his seven courses. He didn't buy any in 2009. He also advised the superintendents of the city's courses to cut back on fall fertilization to save money.

"We hunkered down a little bit," Lyon says.

Lyon, of course, was not alone. Forty-one percent of superintendents cut their budgets 5 percent to 10 percent in 2009, and 19 percent cut them 10 percent to 20 percent, according to our survey. Thirty-five percent said they didn't cut their maintenance budgets at all.

Interestingly, Lyon, despite his accrued wisdom, learned that he shouldn't have made some of the cuts he made. He regrets not purchasing the new golf cars because some of the old golf cars died on the course. Lyon not only had to spend

*Continued on page 23*