

By Bill Roberts

JUST GROWING GRASS?

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Earlier this year the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association participated in a meeting of a seemingly diverse group of organizations from throughout the state who, in a larger perspective, actually represent a common theme; a reasonable approach to the utilization of Wisconsin's resources. Adopting the acronym "STEWART" Conference (Silviculture, Tourism, Environment, Wildlife, Agriculture, Recreation and Development), this gathering was an opportunity to provide input to development and presentation of a legislative agenda.

A similar opportunity presented itself to the WGCSA recently through the Wisconsin Agri-Business Council. Later this year, November 9-10, 1987, Governor Thompson will convene a state "Small Business Conference" in Madison. Over 10,000 small businesses throughout the State have received information from Lt. Gov. McCallum's office in order that the concerns of such operations (and in this overall grouping one must include golf courses, country clubs, golf clubs, etc.) can be vocalized. In fact, the point of this Conference will be to, again, develop a legislative agenda that can be supported by the Governor in the overall interest of small business.

This process, however, will first involve a series of regional meetings across the state which will entertain local discussion and will select delegates to the Madison conference. It is at these "regional meetings" that an opportunity exists to impact the direction that the State of Wisconsin may take for the next two years. It is an opportunity to place on the agenda those

items which are of concern to our industry.

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association, the Wisconsin Golf Course Association and the Wisconsin Forestry/Rights-of-Way/Turf Coalition have met and developed a set of issues which will be incorporated into a larger perspective to be presented by the Wisconsin Agri-Business Council. This WA-BC view will then be presented at the various regional meetings in order to impact the ultimate process in Madison.

As agreed upon by the WGCSA, the WTA, the WFROWT and the WGCA, areas of concern for our industry will include:

1. the need to enhance requirements in the area of pesticide usage in order that "economic thresholds" are recognized and that the judicious use of pesticides by professionals who have demonstrated proficiency in the use of such essential management tools is accepted.

This enhancement of requirements may take form by way of refining and enforcing existing regulations rather than by continually drafting new regulations which may be either unworkable for small business or unenforceable by the State because of staffing or other budgetary restrictions.

2. the need to recognize that economic development and the "quality of life" in Wisconsin are inevitably linked and that factors such as recreation, both active and passive, are part of that "quality of life".

It is a basic truism that "a healthy environment supports a healthy econo-

my" and that both require a degree of management. The environment in which recreational opportunities exist is, to a large degree, provided by the turfgrass industry, which by conservative estimate as recently as 1984 is a \$794,000,000.00 industry in the State. This environment is a tangible asset which has been and can be effective in attracting new business and retaining current business.

3. the need to recognize that state and local government must develop an attitude of "shared responsibility" with the private sector if we are to be effective in protecting, while utilizing, our resources.

This effectiveness will be determined, to a great degree, by the ability of government and the private sector to develop or enhance, mutually, those regulations or that legislation which is pragmatically workable for small business and practically enforceable by state and local government.

4. the need to recognize the ultimate importance for consistency in legislation and regulation and that local government usurpation of state government responsibility in protecting our resources will only lead to confusion, at best, and chaos inevitably.

It will be imperative for the courts of the State of Wisconsin to recognize situations such as the "Town of Casey" controversy as undesirable if

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this state is to continue to develop a directed, focused plan for the practical protection and utilization of our resources.

Included with this column you will find a tentative schedule for the regional meetings of the "Governor's Small Business Conference". We need people (Golf Course Superintendents) to attend in each and every area to support the ultimate positions which can be of benefit to our industry. If you need further explanation or clarification, please give me a call. It has become obvious that the profession is no longer "just growing grass" but requires an interest in all issues affecting that most honorable task.

Governor's Small Business Conference Regional Meetings

DATE	LOCATION	FACILITY	COUNTY ALLOCATION
Tues., Sept. 1	Racine/Kenosha	UW-Parkside	Racine, Kenosha
Wed., Sept. 2	Sheboygan	Lakeland College	Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Ozaukee
Thurs., Sept. 3	Milwaukee	Ramada Inn - Airport	Milwaukee
Tues., Sept. 8	LaCrosse	Radisson Hotel	LaCrosse, Adams, Jackson, Juneau, Monroe, Trempeleau
Wed., Sept. 9	Hudson	Hudson House	St. Croix, Pierce, Polk, Dunn
Thurs., Sept. 10	Eau Claire	Ray Wachs Civic Center	Chippewa, Clark, Pepin, Rusk, Taylor, Eau Claire, Buffalo
Mon., Sept. 14	Madison	Quality Inn	Dane, Sauk, Columbia, Dodge
Tues., Sept. 15	Platteville	UW-Platteville	Crawford, Grant, Iowa, Lafayette, Richland
Wed., Sept. 16	Janesville	Hoffman House	Rock, Green, Walworth
Fri., Sept. 18	Green Bay	Ramada Inn	Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Menomonee, Marinette, Oconto, Shawano
Mon., Sept. 21	Stevens Point	Elizabeth Inn, Plover	Marathon, Portage, Waupaca, Wood, Marquette
Tues., Sept. 22	Rhineland	Nicolet College	Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Price, Oneida, Vilas
Wed., Sept. 23	Hayward	Lakewoods Resort	Ashland, Burnett, Barron, Sawyer, Washburn
Thurs., Sept. 24	Superior	Quality Inn	Douglas, Bayfield
Tues., Sept. 29	Waukesha	Waukesha Co. Tech. Inst.	Waukesha, Jefferson
Wed., Sept. 30	Appleton	Liberty Hall, Kimberly	Winnebago, Outagamie, Waushara, Calumet
Thurs., Oct. 1	Fond du Lac	Moraine Park Tech. Inst.	Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Washington

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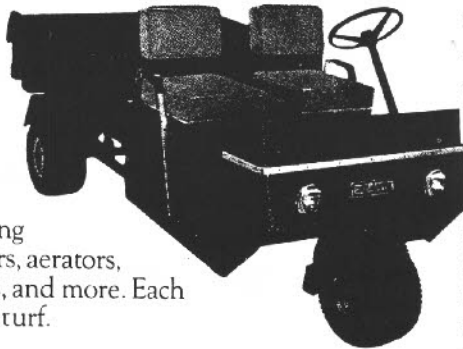
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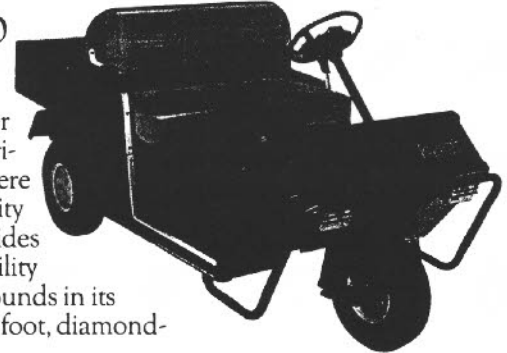
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