

# GREEN INDUSTRY NEWS

## Sod growers battle recession

Sod producers are having to improve their management practices to survive in the current market conditions. Representatives of the industry meeting at the American Sod Producers Annual Summer Convention agreed that sod sales are significantly down, due primarily to reductions in new home construction. According to Walt Pemrick of Warren Turf Nursery, producers are adjusting to the downturn by cutting back on overhead costs and making a more concerted sales effort.

According to Ralph White of Southern Turf Nurseries Tifton, GA and president of the ASPA, the smaller operators are under the most pressure. "A business which is as capital intensive as

sod is very difficult to justify on 50 acres." White feels that sod producers are becoming more business minded, keeping closer inventories, using more effective means of cost accounting, using more efficient machinery and hiring a higher quality of employee. The tighter market has narrowed the

open up specialized markets by developing regional sod grasses from dry land grasses, salt tolerant species and low maintenance varieties. "In the future, water will dictate the types of grasses we produce" stated Gardner. Water shortages will require sod producers to offer sod that is suitable to local climatic conditions, according to many sod growers.

Producers also have the opportunity to open new markets in areas that traditionally use seed rather than sod. Because the price of sod has come down dramatically due to oversupply, efforts are being made to convince both professional and retail consumers to convert from seeding to the use of sod.

According to White, the ASPA is planning its activities with the short term difficulties of its members in mind. Symposiums on water usage and business management are being offered in conjunction with the association's winter convention in San Antonio TX. White feels that the management changes that are being made in the industry as a result of this recession will put sod growers in a very strong position when economic conditions improve.



**Fourteen teams** competed in the Sod Rodeo during the ASPA Convention in Denver CO.

profit margin on sod and made mistakes far more costly than they were a few years ago.

Al Gardner from Greenlawn Sod Co., Inc., of Broomfield CO, commented that the industry is trying to

## COMING SOON

**National Council for Interior Horticultural Certification Exams**, Interior Plantscape Association Convention, Portland, OR Oct 25-27, and Tropical Plant Industries Exposition, Coconut Grove, FL Jan. 20-22. The final Step in the NCIHC certification process, the exams contain five sections: horticulture, business, maintenance, design and plant identification. To find out more about the certification process Contact NCIHC, One Mannions Lane, Danbury CT, 06810, 203/792-6085.

**Turfgrass Symposium**, Oct, 20-21, Columbus, OH. Focusing on turfgrass fertilization, the symposium will feature talks in on topics such as fall fertility, responses of turf to nitrogen sources, rates and timing of nitrogen, and the effects of potassium and phosphorus in turfgrass maintenance. Contact Dr. B.G. Joyner Plant Diagnostic Lab, Chemlawn, 6969 Worthington-Galena Rd., Suite L, Worthington, OH 43085 614/885-8367.

## SEED

### Davis Rogers Investment buys Vaughan-Jacklin

The Vaughan-Jacklin Corp. has agreed to sell its business and assets to the Davis Rogers Investment Group. The Vaughan-Jacklin board of directors was unanimously in favor of the proposed purchase agreement and has agreed to sign a voting and proxy agreement for 33% of the outstanding shares of Vaughan-Jacklin.

Davis Rogers is offering \$13.75 per share for Vaughan-Jacklin stock, less the expenses for the transaction. The purchase price is also conditional upon the net worth of Vaughan-Jacklin remaining the same as their preliminary estimate. After the transaction,

Vaughan-Jacklin intends to make an offer to each shareholder giving him the option of redeeming his shares for cash.

Vaughan-Jacklin is a distributor, manufacturer and grower of professionally used horticultural products and home garden supply items. The Davis Rogers Investment Group which owns and operates substantial agricultural businesses and real estate. David Rogers presently owns and runs companies involved in growing and distributing sod, raising row crops and ranching.

## USGA forms research committee

The United States Golf Association has formed the Turfgrass Research Committee. "In time, the research compiled by this committee could lead to major breakthroughs in turfgrass maintenance," said USGA Senior Executive Director Harry Easterly Jr.

The long-term program will be a multi-million dollar undertaking. The primary purpose of the program is to develop minimal maintenance turfgrasses that are water conserving, salt tolerant, disease and insect resistant and will provide excellent playing surfaces. One of the major efforts of the committee will be to form a computerized reference source for all turfgrass research literature. This will bring together every piece of literature dedicated to turfgrass research from throughout the world.

The committee will also fund overseas expeditions which will enable researchers to gather grasses from all over the world. An expedition for plant material search in Asia and South Africa has already been authorized.

## Owners form independent group

A new golf industry trade association, the Golf Course Association (GCA), has been formed by the owners of privately-held public golf courses. Directors of the National Association of Public Golf Courses voted in April to become an independent group and adopt the new moniker, "Golf Course Association." NAPGC had been an affiliate of the National Golf Foundation for the past five years.

GCA's objective is to grow quickly as the voice for the owners of tax-paying public golf courses and earn a position as one of the major independent forces within the golf industry, according to Bailey Trull, owner of Trull Brook Golf Course, Tewksbury, MA. The association will represent public course owners on industry and governmental issues and is envisioned as an important business and management education resource for the daily-fee segment of the golf industry.

GCA is beginning with a membership of approximately 150 golf course owners. As of January 1, 1982, NGF reports that there are 5428 daily fee golf courses in the U.S. GCA predicts a membership growth rate in excess of 200% annually over the next several years. Michael Rippey of Smith, Bucklin and Associates has been named executive director of the association which is headquartered in Chicago and has offices in Washington, DC. Regular membership dues are \$175 for nine-hole courses and \$250 for courses with 18 or more holes. Companies which provide products or services to GCA member courses may enroll as associate members for \$200. Charter memberships are being offered until the Golf Course Association's 1982 Annual Meeting, December 1-4, at Arnold Palmer's Bay Hill Club and Lodge, Orlando, FL.

## INTERIOR

### California announces national interior show

A California publisher has announced plans for a National Interior Landscape Exposition to be held at Disneyland Hotel Convention Center, Anaheim, for June 1983.

Florida has been the center of the interior foliage market since its creation, although interior landscapers are now in business throughout the U.S.

Hester Communications, publisher of *Western Landscaping News*, hopes to attract thousands of interior plant specifiers to Anaheim as well as hundreds of exhibitors. Hester currently coordinates the American Pavilion at the International Bicycle and Motorcycle Exhibit in Cologne, Germany.

A panel consisting of representatives from the Associated Landscape Contractors Association, the Interior Plantscape Association, the American Society of Landscape Architects, and interior landscape firms is helping Hester with show planning.

## NURSERY

### Nurserymen hit the beach (in Hawaii)

"Oahu" means gathering place in Hawaiian and the nurserymen did just that as they flocked to Honolulu, HI, to attend the 107th Annual Convention of the American Association of Nurserymen.



NLA President Gerald Harrell

The convention ran five days and was chock full of information for the sundry affiliated associations of AAN. Tours and seminars were held for nurserymen and National Landscape Asso-

*Continued on page 10*

## UPDATE

### Maintenance pegged at 19%

According to the National Landscape Association's latest Management Survey, landscapers reported that maintenance services provided 19% of their total business. Regionally, the Northeast reported the highest percentage — 26%, while the Great Plains region came in at 12%.

Of the 138 firms that participated in the survey, 97% performed pruning as part of their maintenance services. Other services include: mulching — 95%, fertilizing — 93%, insect and disease control — 80%, chemical weed control — 75%, lawn renovation — 70%, planting for seasonal color — 66%, mowing and edging — 57%, manual weed control — 51%, watering — 40%, litter and trash removal — 33%, snow removal — 25% (Northeast: 34% and Great Lakes: 34%), and sweeping parking lots — 19%.

In chemical weed control, 70% indicated they used selective herbicides, 52% indicated they use non-selective herbicides, and 11% use aquatic herbicides.

### Late charge most popular collection practice

A recent management survey by the National Landscape Association concluded that 85% of the members responding assess late charges to encourage prompt payment of accounts. Regionally, the responses ranged from 62% in the Southwest to 93% in both the Great Lakes and Great Plains. The average monthly assessment was 1.7%.

Local attorneys were reported to have been used by 65% of the firms. Small claims courts have been used by 55% of the respondents. Mechanic's liens and collection agencies were used at one time or another by 37% of the firms, often as a last resort.

### ALCA launches management division, show, and book

The Associated Landscape Contractors of America Board voted in July to launch a Landscape Management Division at a meeting and educational seminar in the Dallas area in November. The Division will have its own set of officers and specialty staff at ALCA headquarters in McLean, VA.

Allen Smith, ALCA executive director, said both upper and middle managers of landscape companies will be invited to the meeting which will feature sessions on marketing, financial management, job costing, and roundtable discussions.

The new division is cooperating with Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publications on a management book, *Cost Effective Landscape Maintenance*, to be published this winter. ALCA and HBJ are responding to requests for more information on business management of the landscape firm. The book will be written by successful landscape businessmen, university instructors, legal and business consultants, and HBJ editors. Maintenance standards will also be included.

ciation members, while many other groups held their annual business meetings. Participating associations included: Garden Centers of America, Wholesale Nursery Growers of America, Horticultural Research Institute, National Association of Plant Patent Owners, American Nurseryman's Protective Association, Nursery Association Executives, Mailorder Association of Nurserymen, and All-America Rose Selections.

The interaction between Hawaiians and mainlanders was one of the most interesting aspects of the convention. Both groups took every opportunity to explore each other's practices and techniques and were genuinely interested in finding out how nurseries and landscaping were handled back home. Six busloads of conventioners turned out to tour native Hawaiian landscapes, which included the Royal Hawaiian Shopping Center, Honolulu International Airport, Spaulding Estate, and the East-West Center of the University of Hawaii.

The convention was very business-oriented, with the majority of the seminars devoted to advertising, marketing and business practices. A particularly interesting seminar was given by Glen Asakawa of Presidio Garden Center, San Diego, CA. He gave an overview of the interior landscaping market and then explained the reasons why his company was not expanding into that area. (He explained that the market is good but the timing was wrong for his firm.) Seminar attendees were well-rewarded for the hours they spent inside the convention hall (away from tempting Waikiki Beach).

On the business end, S. Kent Langlinais, owner and manager of Kent's Nursery, Youngsville, LA, was elected AAN president and R. Jerry Rosso, secretary and treasurer of Julius Rosso Wholesale Nursery Co., Seattle, WA, was elected vice president. R. J. Hutton, Conrad-Pyle Co.; David Farley, Farley Bros. Nursery; and Richard Aldridge, Aldridge Nursery; were named to the AAN board of directors.

#### TURF

### Lawn Institute names Roberts

The Lawn Institute confirmed Dr. Eliot Roberts as the new director at its annual meeting in Dallas, TX. He is leaving a position as professor of soil science at the University of Rhode Island, where he was supervising programs

*Continued on page 14*

by William Hoffman

### Five airports on beetle watch

The USDA is requiring five airports to inspect departing planes for hitchhiking Japanese beetles to prevent further spread of the pest. The airports are located in Delaware, New Jersey, Ohio and Maryland.

Beetle numbers in these areas are extremely high according to USDA. Gary Morehead, a USDA Animal and Plant Health inspector, said airlines must use mechanical or chemical means to keep the beetles off the aircraft.

The airports affected are Dover Air Force Base, Del.; McGuire Air Force Base, N.J.; Port Columbus Airport, OH; Rickenbacker Air Force Base, OH; and Baltimore-Washington Airport, MD.

### Fire ant panel offers little help

The imported fire ant symposium sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency offered little immediate help to EPA in resolving the control program for this insect.

The fire ant has now infested almost 1/4 of a billion acres in nine states from North Carolina to Texas. A panel on the social and economic factors relating to the fire ant recommended that an unsubsidized relief program would be the most feasible with property owners paying for the chemical treatment. Any program in which the federal or state government would participate would be so vulnerable to funding, legal, and management problems that it would never become operational.

The panel felt strongly that the fire ant problem should be considered a public health problem and not a threat to agriculture.

Several chemical companies reported on new products for the control of the fire ant. Most of the promising are of the biorational types like insect growth regulators and could be the most environmentally acceptable and safe. However, EPA representatives warned that even these compounds would have to be completely evaluated before being registered by the Agency. It would appear that the containment of the imported fire ant is years in the future.

### Monsanto sues EPA for release of Roundup data

Claiming irreparable damage and contempt of a District Court order, Monsanto Company is suing EPA for releasing trade secret data on glyphosate, the primary component of Roundup, to a Washington, D.C., law firm.

Monsanto claims EPA did not follow regulations requiring 60-day notice before release of data, nor did it comply with a pretrial order from the U.S. District Court for Eastern Missouri.

The purpose of the law firm's request for data is unknown. The information released consisted of material used to support the registration of Roundup.

studying the use of plants in disturbed environments.

Roberts did his undergraduate work at the University of Rhode Island, then received his PhD in soil and plant physiology from Rutgers University. He went on to become a professor at Iowa State University and then chairman of the ornamental horticulture departments at the University of Florida and later at University of Rhode Island.

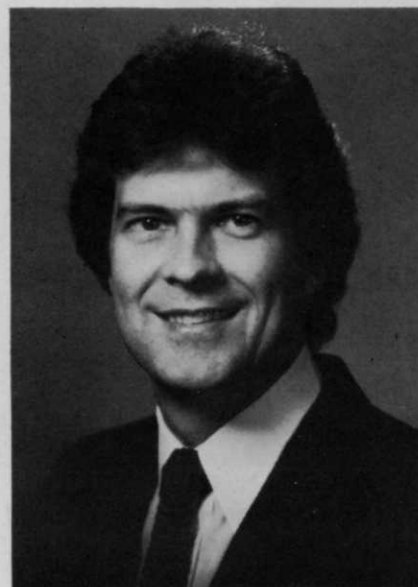
Roberts is succeeding Dr. Robert Schery, who is retiring after 25 years as the director of the Institute. The new location for the staff offices of the Lawn Institute will be P.O. Box 108, Pleasant Hill, TN 38578.

The board of the Institute was also elected at the Dallas meeting. Norman Rothwell of Rothwell Seeds Ltd. in Canada was elected president, Bob Peterson of E.F. Burlingham & Co. in Oregon is vice president and Robert Russell of J & L Adikes in New York is secretary/treasurer.

#### EQUIPMENT

### Sloan replaces West at Cushman/Ryan

Gary Sloan has joined OMC Lincoln's advertising and marketing staff in Lincoln, NB. He succeeds Scott West who was promoted as a marketing manager for the company's West Coast Operations.



Gary Sloan

Sloan was promotion manager for Rickel Mfg. Corp., Salina, KS, prior to joining OMC. He will manage marketing of the Cushman and Ryan lines of turf equipment.

## Cal Poly to offer Irrigation curriculum

California Polytechnic University, Pomona, will offer an Irrigation Design curriculum beginning this September. Cal Poly Professor of Horticulture Kent Kurtz said the University worked closely with the American Society of Irrigation Consultants and many of the irrigation manufacturers in the area to develop the new coursework.

The four-year curriculum will be implemented by Kurtz, Dr. Joe Hung, and Professor James Degen. Students will study turfgrass management, landscape contracting, golf course management, plant materials, soil science, and drainage in addition to the irrigation courses.

For more information on the new program, contact the Ornamental Horticulture Dept., Irrigation Design Studies, California State Polytechnic University, 3801 W. Temple Ave., Pomona, CA 91768.

## EQUIPMENT

### Jacobsen hosts student seminar

The Jacobsen division of Textron sponsored the College Student Turf Seminar for 48 students of agronomy and turf at its headquarters in Racine, WI. The seminar presented information of grounds care techniques such as basic management, turf equipment maintenance and field experience.

According to the company, the turf seminar remains the first and only joint company-distributor sponsored program of its kind. "Our Turf Seminar, now in its 15th year, has always offered

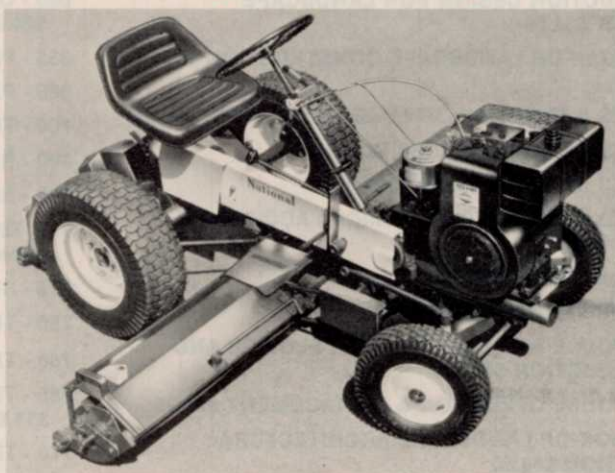


**Students participating** in the Jacobsen Turf Care seminar received hands-on experience in many aspects of equipment maintenance.

college students a premier chance to learn about the latest turf care advancements," said Ned Brinkman, general sales manager.

Divided into two identical sessions, the seminar included training on engines, mowers, turf tractors, hydraulics, hydrostatic transmissions, grinding and

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lapping of reels, preventative maintenance, budgeting and life cycle costing, safety systems and energy conservation. Students also gained hands-on experience operating a wide variety of grounds care equipment during a field day.

**LANDSCAPE**

**Consultant organizes contracting data**

Estate Landscape Consultants, the creation of Lon Monroe and Tim Johnson, is a new service that offers clients complete landscape information. The Santa Barbara, CA firm is becoming a clearinghouse on computer that contains information that can be used to administer site planning, construction schedules, materials selection pricing and availability and sources for specialized solutions to specialized landscape problems.

"We work with contractors and owners of the sites, often managing the job as well as providing the necessary information," stated Johnson. The company works on properties from 5 to 3000 acres in size.

Monroe and Johnson are also developing an extensive list of consultants who can advise on specialized projects. Associate consultants include horticulturist, Jerry Sortomme; pest adviser, Bruce Craig; and arborist Bruce Van Dyke. The data in the computers at this point is the most extensive is expanding to a national scale and have recently completed a several thousand acre project the Sycamore Valley Ranch and Walden Condominiums in Aurora, OH.

**LANDSCAPE**

**Environmental Industries Names Rose EVP and CFO**

Environmental Industries has placed David Rose in the newly created position of executive vice president and chief financial officer. Rose joined the company in 1972 and has served as the vice president and chief financial officer since 1974.

A Certified Public Accountant, he will be responsible for all accounting and financial policies as well as general managerial activities for the com-

pany and its four subsidiaries: Environmental Care Inc., Valley Crest Landscape, Valley Crest Tree Company and



David Rose

Western Landscape Construction, which are involved in landscape construction, landscape maintenance and tree growing. The company reported sales of \$60 million in 1981.

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