

## GOLF

### Firestone gets cosmetic surgery

Firestone Country Club in Akron, Ohio, looked a bit tattered in September: all that lied at the end of each fairway on the South Course were craters and mounds of dirt.

No worry, says club superintendent Brian Mabie, who oversaw the replacement of all 18 greens after a two-year fight against bacterial wilt.

"You've got to make a mess to make progress. We had a lot of work to do," he tells WEEDS TREES & TURF. But by the spring, "all we should have to do is put on finishing touches."

Work began immediately after the annual World Series of Golf held Aug. 21-25, says Mabie.

And it was more than just replacing greens. At the same time, Firestone employees and independent contractors installed a drainage system beneath all greens where previously there was none.

Spectator mounds were constructed and small, subtle changes made.

It was all part of bringing the course up to USGA specs, he says.

Some of those changes: slope alterations on 10 greens with a severe contour change on No. 17; widening both the pond and fairway on No. 16 (the Monster); shortening No. 5 to 200 yards (from 234); reducing the green at 18 to almost half of what it was; and a general rebunkering.

"We're not trying to redesign things here. We're doing what everyone has suggested doing for years. We're working with a design that was developed in the 1920s," says Mabie.

Tom Pearson, respected architect for Golfforce Inc., suggested the changes after perusing the Firestone layout. Golfforce Inc. is owned by Jack Nicklaus.

"It was a tough thing that Tom did," says Mabie. "We've tried to improve the course without losing the characteristics that make it Firestone."

Mabie called in Tifton, Ga., resident Ernest Jones to shape the greens to specs suggested by Golfforce.



Brian Mabie, Firestone CC golf superintendent.

Those greens were seeded with Penncross bentgrass, says Mabie. No more local bentgrasses for Firestone.

The old Nimisila bentgrass developed bacterial wilt in the spring of 1984 and was effectively controlled with a bactericide over two golf seasons.

"It's funny," says Mabie. "They say the disease is stress-related but I didn't have it in my stress areas."

He continues: "We're one of the few course in northeast Ohio to have the disease, but it's really not that big of deal. I was amazed at the misinformation that came out about our greens."

Mabie says not one media type contacted him during tournament week to get facts on the problem.

Firestone, owned and operated by Club Corporation of America (CCA), will be new and improved by next spring, says Mabie, for both the golfer and spectator.

—Ken Kuhajda

## GOLF

### Survey lists turf maintenance problems

Annual bluegrass, dandelions and crabgrass are the most prominent problem weeds in the green industry, according to a survey recently released by the Moby Chemical Co., Kansas City, Mo.

Forty-nine-and-a-half percent of all golf course superintendents who responded to the survey indicated that crabgrass was a major summer weed problem. Fifty percent said that dandelions were a major spring weed problem. *Poa annua* was most-cited as a major problem in the fall and winter.

Leading disease problems, by season, were helminthosporium leaf spot (spring), brown patch (summer), dollar spot (fall) and fusarium patch (winter). Each of those diseases was named as a problem by more than 50



percent of the survey respondents. Fusarium and fairy ring were called the "most difficult to control diseases because there's no effective product on the market" by 6.1 and 5.8 percent of golf course superintendents polled.

Cutworms were cited as a major summer insect problem by the most superintendents. Grubworms were ranked first in the spring and fall, and mole crickets were tops (on only 3.4 percent of responses) in the winter.

Most-named "difficult-to-control insect problem because there's not an effective product on the market" was the mole cricket, cited on 4.5 percent of the returned questionnaires.

Approximately 300 responses

were received from golf course superintendents. Questionnaires were also received from three other turf care segments: chemical lawn care, landscape contractors and grounds superintendents. Results of those segments closely approximated those from the golf course market.

Specific to the golf course market, however, was one question: "What trends most affect golf course management?"

Most frequent responses, in order of frequency, were:

- "increased maintenance costs/budget cuts"
- "increased play that is hard on the course"
- "restrictions on pesticide applications"
- "increasing green speeds that require more maintenance" and
- "lower fairway mowing heights."

## TREES

# Chain saw massacre ends in \$17,000 fine

The next time your neighbor trims your tree that's dropping leaves on his property, show him this story.

Back in 1982, Julie Mattison of Mission Hills, Calif., and her mother were raking leaves in the back of their home when mom asked daughter to trim the neighbor's tree, an Oriental Orchid (*Bauhinia variegata*), whose leaves were falling onto the Mattison's property.

The story, as reported by the *Los Angeles Times* and reprinted in *Landscape Contractor* (the publication by the California Landscape and Irrigation Council Inc.), continues:

Julie, now a 17-year-old high school senior, went a little crazy with the saw. By the time she finished the 30-foot, 15-year-old Orchid was reduced to a five-foot dwarf.

"I guess I got carried away," Julie told the *Times*.

The Mattison's neighbor, Carollee

Dunson, obviously unamused, decided to prosecute the Mattisons and a Van Nuys jury awarded her \$8,753 in actual damages and \$100 in punitive damages.

But that's not all. The Superior Court judge, citing a state law designed to protect trees against "wrongful injury," doubled the actual damage total to \$17,506!

Why such a high total?

According to the article, a nursery employee testified that a new Oriental Orchid costs \$1,800.

However, planting the 54-inch box containing the tree requires a 100-ton crane with a 210-foot boom at a cost of \$6,000, the nurseryman said.

That's no typo. The Mattison's attorney couldn't believe it either. "Outrageous," said attorney Robert Priver. "Do you mean to say you need a 210-foot crane to replace a little tree?"



The jury evidently bought the nurseryman's testimony.

And here's the kicker: the tree's original buyer testified during the two-day trial that she paid 99 cents for the two-inch Orchid 15 years ago.

In Dunson's original suit filed in late October 1982, she had asked \$126,259 in damages.

## WEEDS

### This Weed has good turf

An unlikely name, Weed, but a jewel of a town at the base of Mount Shasta in Northern California. Nice parks too.

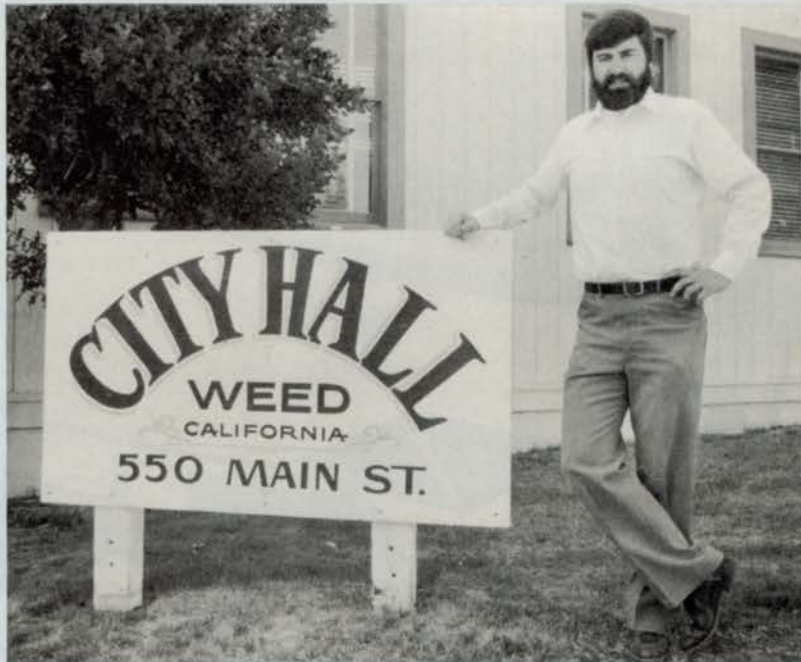
Patrick "Pappy" Lobis says its the soot from the old powerhouse that enriches his soil, makes his park turfgrass grow.

Years ago when lumber was a bigger deal than it is now in Weed they carted tons of sawdust from the sawmill to the powerhouse and burned it to generate electricity.

"I think all that soot worked into the soil and helped it," says Lobis, parks supervisor for the Weed Recreation and Park District.

Whatever the reason, Weed boasts a small but enviable parks system. "Pappy" and his small crew (two fulltime, two seasonal workers) tend four parks, about 30 acres of healthy Kentucky bluegrass.

"We've got a great Little League program, co-ed softball, and the high school and college (College of the Siskiyou) use our parks too."



Steve Feldman, city administrator of Weed, Calif.

City administrator Steve Feldman says Weed has about 3,000 people, but the parks department serves another 2,000 in the immediate area.

Feldman came to Weed almost two years ago after picking up his

PhD at Oregon State University. He says he came to Weed in large part because of the beauty of the area.

The name Weed?

"The town was named after Abner Weed. He began the lumber mill here," says Feldman.

## TREES

### Plant wise; reap fuel savings and comfort

You can save 20 percent of home winter heating costs and as much as 80 percent of summer air conditioning expenses with effective landscaping, says one Northeast expert.

"It's important for homeowners to consider summer and winter energy needs when developing a landscaping plan," says Dr. David R. DeWalle of Pennsylvania State University. The forestry specialist adds, "I've seen more homes with improper landscaping than with proper landscaping."

Dr. DeWalle gives these tips:

- Vegetation should not shade the home in winter. It reduces natural solar heating.
- Shade trees should not be planted on the south side of the home. Shade for east and west walls reduces air conditioning costs more.
- Single or double rows of trees planted upwind from the home reduce wind velocity and cut down on cold air through doors and windows.
- Shrubs planted around the foun-

dition of the home save energy by deflecting winds from the home.

Says Dr. DeWalle, "Landscaping is most beneficial for single-family homes. While homeowners may face practical limitations on their lots, there are still things they can do with landscaping to reduce their fuel bills."

## PESTICIDES

### Insurance law threatens 1986 spraying in Mass.

A revision in Massachusetts' pesticide laws will be needed before applicators will be able to spray in that state in 1986. The reason?

Applicators must show, in addition to general liability coverage, evidence of pollution and contamination insurance. But, because of sweeping changes in the insurance industry, that coverage either is or soon will be unavailable.

The National Arborist Association (NAA) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) are working with the state pesticide bureau to find a solution.

Says Robert Felix, executive director of the NAA: "The lawmakers in Massachusetts have to generate some kind of solution. They're the only ones who can."

Mark Buffone, certification coordinator for that state's pesticide board agrees and he's optimistic they will. But, he says pesticide applicators must also prepare themselves for tighter licensing requirements and stricter enforcement.

"We've been on top of this," Buffone tells WT&T, "probably to the industry's surprise. We know we've got to do something by January 1 or find out who's offering this type of coverage."

Slicing this legal Gordian knot, he explains, might not be more difficult than an "emergency regulation" which would allow applicators to work while giving lawmakers time to study the issue and meet with the insurance industry.

Even so, insurance is secondary to the main issue: the public's confidence, Buffone says.

"Let's have tough licensing standards and let the public know they're



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# SPORTS TURF

by Ron Hall, associate editor

## Time to strike

God—the lover of all that is natural—will not likely rain lightning bolts onto the heads of the makers or users of artificial grass. As miracles go, that would rank somewhere below (way below) the parting of the Red Sea.



Anyway, we're supposed to do some things for ourselves.

In this spirit of doing something, a small cast of respected turfmen gathered at the Midwest Regional Turf Conference last March. Loosening their ties after an afternoon of swapping tales, they mulled the question: "Who decides synthetic turf at the sports fields at our schools? Who are the decision makers?"

Dr. Bill Daniel, Purdue University's imminent turfgrass expert, directed. Galling to those in attendance,

particularly Daniel, was the announcement just weeks before that Illinois was going carpet. Purdue stands alone as the only Big Ten school still playing football Saturday afternoons on grass, real grass.

The decision makers? After an hour's discussion, they remained nameless and faceless. Some, however—those who have decided fake over real—are suddenly drawing fire from the popular press. Opinions are being molded by magazines and newspapers at the breakfast table.

*Sports Illustrated* blistered sports carpets with a 21-page spread in its August 12 edition. *Nightline* fueled the controversy on national television. Syndicated columnist Jody Powell scalded synthetic turf in some of the nation's most respected newspapers.

But, proponents of synthetic surfaces aren't taking the critical press lightly.

Francis Reining, a Monsanto general manager (Monsanto's Astroturf is the most popular synthetic on the market), responded to *Sports Illustrated*. In part he wrote: "Opinion is one thing. But when you attempt to unilaterally denigrate an industry, you have a responsibility to present conflicting opinions of acknowledged experts and facts on both sides of the argument."

The controversy heats.

That's good news for us in the turf industry. We've shown we're not good crusaders. We've build a case—injury data and costs—but we can't seem to find, never mind convince, those with the final say.

Now we find ourselves with allies. That small group, as indecisive as it seemed last March, guides us.

Let's find these decision makers while public opinion simmers. Let's present our side of the story again. Soon.

tough. Then being certified will mean something," he says. "The pendulum of regulation shouldn't be so stringent so as to strangle applicators but I think some of these industries could avoid additional regulations in the long run with them."

## PARKS

### Beverly Hills serious about park facelift

A \$2.5 million turf renovation and re-landscaping project is underway in 10-acre Roxbury Park in Beverly Hills, Cal.

American Landscape, Inc., Canoga Park, is regrading and replanting three bowling greens (Tifgreen hybrid bermuda stolons), the sports field (Santa Ana hybrid stolons), and the baseball infield (Tifgreen stolons). The balance of the park is being hydroseeded with a mixture of fescue and bluegrass.

The park is also receiving new ornamental plantings. Ten large trees at Roxbury were excavated, boxed, and relocated in the park along with 50 new trees. New plantings include crape myrtles, liquidambers, redwoods, and honey locusts.

Along with the plantings, the park's irrigation and drainage systems are being upgraded. Landscape architect for the project is Ericksson, Peters, Thoms & Associates of Pasadena.

New lighting, bleachers, walkways, and a 7,000-sq-ft clubhouse round out the improvements which should be completed by mid-December.

## MUNICIPAL

### Dying tree alerts town to gas leaks

A dying 25-year-old shade tree alerted officials in the small town of Cinnaminson, N.J., to potentially dangerous natural gas leaks late this summer.

"We couldn't find anything organic wrong with the tree," says Fran Leusner, a 32-year veteran of the township public works department. "It didn't have an insect problem, so we had the gas lines checked out and found eight leaks in a small area."

Leusner tells WT&T he suspected natural gas after learning that the owners of the tree also reported losing two holly bushes and a neighbor complained of the death of part of a front lawn.

Leusner says dying grass and plants don't usually mean a gas leak, "but it's not the first time we've found something like this."

## Renovation underway at Ga. turf facility

Change marks the turfgrass program at the Georgia Station in Griffin, Ga.

The aim? To make that turfgrass research facility one of the finest in the nation, reports Dr. Robert N. Carrow of the College of Agriculture at the University of Georgia.

Here is what's happening at Griffin:

- Turfgrass research plots of warm and cool season grass species (bermuda, zoysia, centipede, St. Au-

gustine, bahia, tall fescue, and creeping bentgrass) are being consolidated into a 10-acre plot.

- New irrigation systems are being installed at the plot site, and also at a special plot of native soil and at a USGA bentgrass green. These last two areas will be used to study water use, drought stress, and irrigation scheduling.

- Creeping bentgrass research is underway on a 32,000-sq-ft golf green.

- A modern equipment storage and shop building is up.

- A stress physiology laboratory is

being developed.

- Two new full-time technicians are being added to the turf program.

The annual turf field day, not held this year because of the work, will return August 12, 1986, Dr. Carrow reports.

## ASSOCIATION

### Conn. nurserymen putting bloom in state

All 169 towns in Connecticut will be receiving six-to-eight-foot flowering crabapple trees this spring thanks to the Connecticut Nurserymen's Association (CNA).

Each town will be getting a tree to celebrate the state's 350th birthday. They will be planted the week of April 25 as an Arbor Day project involving local elementary school children. A grove of crabapple trees will also be planted at the capitol as part of the celebration.

The CNA is comprised of 383 wholesale, retail, and landscape nurserymen.

## PEOPLE

### Dr. Smiley leaves Cornell; heads west

After 12 years at Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., Dr. Richard Smiley accepted a position in Oregon. On Oct. 15, he became the superintendent of the Columbia Basin Agricultural Research Center, Pendleton, Ore. He has also reportedly accepted a courtesy appointment as professor of plant pathology at Oregon State University.

"I view the move as an opportunity for professional advancement," Dr. Smiley tells WEEDS TREES & TURF. A Californian, Dr. Smiley studied at Washington State University.

Other news from the Northwest has Dr. Richard C. Skogley being named "Man of the Year" by the Oregon Seed Trade Association. Dr. Skogley, in his 26th year at the University of Rhode Island, is the 11th person to receive the award.

Congratulations are also in order to Jim Green, Oregon State University Extension horticultural specialist. The American Society for Horticultural Science feted Green with its 1985 "Nursery Extension Award."

Green launched the "Ornamentals Northwest" newsletter series which began as an Oregon Extension publication but grew to include Washington, Idaho, and British Columbia.

Also in the Northwest, the 32nd annual meeting of the Merion Bluegrass Association saw the election of

**JAN.** A sun with a face and sweat drops, indicating heat and stress.

**FEB.** A person blowing wind towards a row of trees.

**MAR.** A landscape with trees and a small building.

**APR.** Three small potted plants in a row.

**MAY** A shovel digging in the soil.

**JUNE** A landscape with trees and a small building.

**JULY** A landscape with trees and a small building.

**AUG.** A sun with a face wearing sunglasses and sweat drops.

**SEPT.** A landscape with trees and a small building.

**OCT.** A landscape with trees and a small building.

**NOV.** A landscape with trees and a small building.

**DEC.** A landscape with trees and a small building.

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# SHORTCUTS

**REBUILDING GREENS.....**The American Society of Golf Course Architects has reprinted "Evolution of the Modern Green" by immediate past president Dr. Michael Hurdzan, in answer to the demand for information on how to rebuild greens. The 24-page brochure is available from the organization for \$5. To receive one, send a check or money order to ASGCA, 221 North La Salle St., Chicago, Ill., 60601.

**MOVABLE DOCK.....**Gary Thornton of Thornton Landscape Management has come up with an interesting concept for receiving nursery and landscape stock: a movable dock. Tractor-trailers making deliveries need only pull into the loading area and park without having to worry about backing into any



docks. The heavy steel dock is then put into place by a fork lift. When the goods are unloaded from the truck, they can then be transported via pallet, and when empty the dock can be returned to its storage area.

**FREEBIE.....**A free brochure that helps calculate the costs of mowing grass is available from 3M. It also tells you how 3M's Embark plant growth regulator can affect changes in your mowing budget, of course.

To receive your copy, send your name and address to Agricultural Products/3M, P.O. Box 33600, 3M Center, St. Paul, Minn., 55133-3600, or phone (800) 328-1300.

**ARCHITECTS DIRECTORY.....**The American Society of Golf Course Architects has published a new membership directory. Copies of the directory are available free of charge by writing the organization at 221 N. Lasalle St., Chicago, Ill., 60601.

**NEW TURFGRASSES.....**Finelawn I Turf Type Tall Fescue has been granted a U.S. Patent Variety Protection Certificate. It's a new-generation tall fescue with a lush green color and narrow tapering leaves that has been highly rated by the USDA's National Turfgrass Evaluation Program.

Also, Gator turf-type perennial ryegrass and Hounddog turf-type tall fescue—popular North American turfgrasses—are taking a trip overseas. Both will be sold in Germany and France, according to J.L. Carnes of International Seeds, Halsey, Ore.

**STMA CONFERENCE.....**The Sports Turf Manager's Association (STMA) will hold its annual educational conference, meeting, and elections in San Francisco, Feb. 1-3, 1986. It will be held in conjunction with the 57th GCSAA Conference and Show.

the following directors: **Don Cornwall**, Fairfield, Wash.; **William Howell**, Imbler, Ore.; **Don Jacklin**, Post Falls, Id.; **Clifford Mattila**, Mercer Island, Wash.; and **Al Pohlschneider**, St. Paul, Ore.

**Ralph Reid** is president of the new **Oklahoma Professional Herbicide Applicators Association**. Reid, a custom applicator from Enid, says "usually it's misuse of the chemical, not the chemical itself, that causes any problems."

The 35-member association is already studying insurance, licensing, and state reciprocity laws. **Betty Mendl**, DuPont industrial weed control specialist, is credited with organizing the association.

This summer saw the formation of the **Nebraska Professional Lawn Care Association (NPLCA)**. President is **Dale Amstutz**, vice president **John Skomal**, and secretary-treasurer **Richard Penn**.

NPLCA directors are: **Rich Mulder**, **Tery Anderson**, **Gary Carstens**, and **Tom Urbanek**.

For membership and information contact Executive Secretary **Don Ellerbe**, NPLCA, 209 W. Ninth St., Hastings, Neb. 68901. (402) 463-5691.

A jacaranda tree at the Disneyland Hotel bears the name of **Frank Conriquez**. This summer he was honored for the 30 years as head gardener at the hotel.

**Bill Rose**, president of Turf-Seed, Inc., Hubbard, Ore., announces the appointment of **Margaret Herbst**, New York, N.Y., as a public relations consultant for special projects.

**Ike Thomas**, Granbury, Tex., is 1985-86 president of the **American Sod Producers Association (ASPA)**. **Al Gardner**, Broomfield, Colo., steps in as vice president and **Doug Morgan**, Wethersfield, Conn., secretary-treasurer.

Newly elected ASPA trustees are: **Ed Davis**, Okeechobee, Fla., and **Bob Goodrich**, Camarillo, Calif.

**R. Douglas Cowan** was elected president of **The Davey Tree Expert Company**, Kent, Ohio, late this summer. Cowan joined Davey Tree 11 years ago.

**Phillip Whitney Yelverton** joins **The Fertilizer Institute** as director, member services. He previously served as marketing analyst for USS AgriChemicals, Atlanta, Ga.

**American Cyanamid** promotes **Brenda S. Krause** to Fort Dodge district sales manager for crop protection chemicals in the Midwest region. **William L. Clark** takes a similar post as Syracuse district manager in the Eastern region. Both are nine-year veterans of Cyanamid.