

# GREEN INDUSTRY NEWS

DECEMBER 1990, VOLUME 29, NUMBER 12

## LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

### CONFERENCES

# Service the customer, and profits necessarily follow

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — In dealing with your customers, you should heed the advice of twisted-tongued baseball sage Yogi Berra: "If people don't want to come out to the ballpark, nobody'll stop 'em."

Best-selling author Michael LeBoeuf provided that and other wisdom as keynote speaker at Green Industry Expo '90 here last month.

He told a full house at the Nashville Convention Center the five best ways to keep customers coming back:

- by far, the most important is to **be reliable**;
- people pay dearly for peace of mind, so **be credible**;
- use tangibles to **be attractive**;
- when customers want service, they want it now, so **be responsive**; and
- **be empathetic**: treat customers the way they want to be treated.

"A typical business hears from only four percent of its dissatisfied customers, (but) a customer who complains is your best friend," LeBoeuf noted. He added that complainers

point out areas of needed improvement, give you a second chance, and offer you a wonderful opportunity to earn their loyalty.

Next year's Expo will have a tough act to follow, judging by comments from some of the more than 3,000 participants.

A sell-out for the Professional Lawn Care Association, Associated Landscape Contractors, and Professional Grounds Management Society, Expo '90 featured more than 250 exhibits and numerous educational sessions.

### Special announcements

On the news front, Expo '90 featured important industry-related announcements.

James Brooks, who ended a 7½-year reign as PLCAA executive director and executive vice president, was named *Lawn Care Industry* magazine's "Man of the Year" by LCI publisher Jon Miducki. And Vince Patterozzi of ServiceMaster was named "Landscape Manager of the Year" by *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT* magazine and the PGMS.



LeBoeuf: Complainers are a business's best friends.

Brooks, who was also given an honorary lifetime membership in the PLCAA, noted: "I've enjoyed my tenure. We've had good times; we've had some tough times. But I've always known we'd pull together, and we did. I thank you forever.

"(For now), I'm going to rest up a little bit. There are lots of opportunities out there, some in the green industry. I'll turn up again in this industry."

The manufacturers of specialty pesticides announced the formation of

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE), to address issues facing the green industry on the regulatory and safety fronts.

The PLCAA announced it has entered into a labeling agreement with K-Mart. K-Mart stores will support the association's new "Grasscycling" campaign by incorporating the program's logo, slogan and environmental message on package labeling for K-Mart's line of Super K-Gro Lawn and Garden products (see related stories).

### Three-in-one works

Expo '90 was a trial run for the three-association concept, and there were few problems reported.

"It was a huge success," said Sandy Marting, the PLCAA's director of public relations. "Everybody loved the show and educational programs, and exhibitors were very happy," said Marting. "Everyone's looking forward to next year."

Debra Dennis, executive director of ALCA, reported an ALCA/PGMS attendance of 528, "more than double the attendance at

ASSOCIATIONS

# PLCAA and Kmart join hands to promote environmental awareness to Americans

last year's St. Louis show. And we did receive quite a number of new memberships on site."

Added Alan Shulder, executive director of the PGMS, "It was an idea whose time had come five years ago."

Reported problems were few. ALCA registration at a separate locale was inconvenient, but sources say next year all three groups' events will be held in a main convention center.

Smaller exhibitors, according to Shulder, said the exhibit floor should have been open longer than the scheduled 10 hours. □

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) announced here that Kmart Corp. will support the association's national environmental awareness campaign, "Grasscycling: Today's Turf, Tomorrow's Earth."

The 4,000-store retail chain will incorporate the program's logo, slogan, and environmental message on package labels for Kmart's

line of Super K-Gro lawn and garden products. Scheduled to appear early in the 1991 merchandising season, the new labeling will be included on all packaged items of Kmart household plant products, liquid and granular fertilizers, and insecticides.

"We are pleased to be including the PLCAA's Grasscycling identifiers on our lawn care products," says William L. Chilcutt,

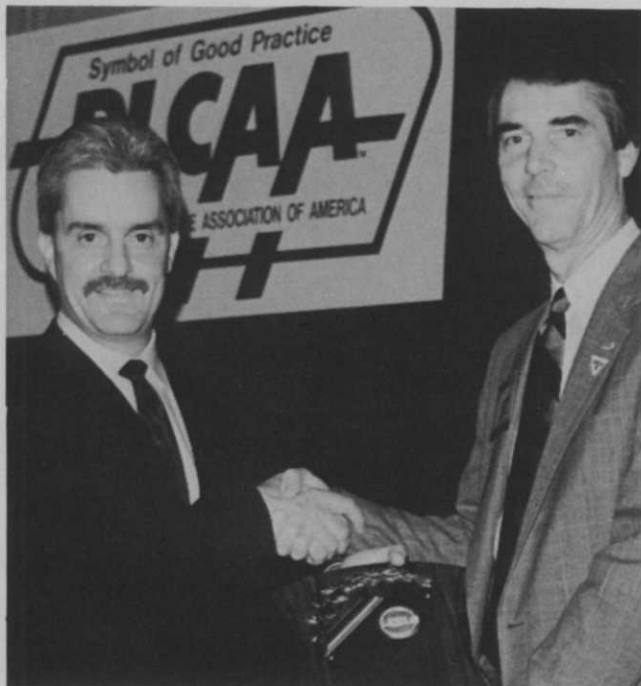
Kmart buyer for horticulture and decorative flowers. "Kmart's environmental program focuses on the solid waste stream, and the PLCAA's program fits in nicely with our overall environmental mission of a healthier environment for America."

The campaign's goal is to urge homeowners to leave grass clippings on the ground while mowing. The

to page 12



A packed room of landscape managers sits enthralled during an educational session at Expo '90 in Nashville



James Brooks (right) accepts the *Lawn Care Industry* "Man of the Year" award from LCI's publisher, Jon Miducki



Vince Patterozzi (left) gets his "Landscape Manager of the Year" award from current PGMS president Ted Shull

**KMART** from page 11  
two-pronged result is fewer tons of waste, and healthier lawns.

The labeling concept was presented to Kmart by The Andersons, a diversified agribusiness which formulates and packages products for major retail, lawn care and golf course distributors.

"We presented the concept to Kmart last summer," said Peter Machin, manager of sales and marketing for The Andersons' Lawn Fertilizer Division.

"We felt the "Grasscycling" program was very appropriate to Kmart's commitment to enhance, protect and preserve the global environment," said Machin.

When the Grasscycling program was introduced earlier this year, PLCAA's Sandy Marting said, "This program provides a practical solution for eliminating millions of tons of clippings taking up space in our municipal landfills." □

## Chemical manufacturers lead parade to support pesticides

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Specialty pesticide manufacturers have united to form a new organization to better support the green industry's battle against misinformation.

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE), an autonomous standing committee within the National Agricultural Chemicals Association (NACA), will act as an umbrella organization. It will address the issues affecting the \$1.3 billion green industry. A key part of the effort, according to sources, is "speaking in a unified voice to communicate the environmental, health and safety benefits of the proper use of pesticides."

"We are constantly bombarded by federal, state and local issues, regulations, legislation and misinforma-

*Budget for RISE is \$440,000, including \$10,000 for membership acquisition.*

tion," says Bill Liles of Ciba-Geigy. "This constant attack has cost us all valuable resources. In most cases, our defense has been weak and poorly focused due to a lack of a central, coordinated effort."

Allen Haws of the Mobay Specialty Products Group says RISE will "support the position that judicious use of pesticides can prove positive in the care, maintenance and protection of public health and property in the urban, suburban and industrial environment.

"It is our mission," says

Haws, "to be responsible to the public and support the industry."

The RISE membership drive has begun as a way to seek industry support and to create a large, strong entity that will have a voice of authority in the public and private sectors. RISE will serve as a clearinghouse of information on specialty markets, to promote and expand opportunities for the industry.

Integral in the program are lobbying at all levels of government, education for the public and end user programs on proper

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pesticide use and handling.

The group's initial proposed budget is \$440,000. Of that amount, \$220,000 is earmarked for salaries for a director, a secretary, office expenses, benefits and travel. Membership acquisition kitty is \$10,000. An additional \$200,000 is to be used for projects like coordinating university support, addressing state and local issues, developing educational programs and addressing environmental issues.

RISE urges participation to unite all resources necessary to the organization's efforts.

Membership in RISE is open to end users like golf course superintendents, landscape contractors and public employees. It is also open to basic manufacturers, formulators, distributors, associations, media and equipment manufacturers.

Those joining before Jan. 31, 1991 will achieve charter member status. □

## LEGISLATION

# Sanity prevails: 'Big Green' fails

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — "Big Green" has turned blue.

State Proposition 128, which would have turned California into a legislative jungle and severely limited pesticide use, was a loser in the Nov. 6 general election here.

Voters refused to foot the bill for "Big Green," which would have cost an estimated \$90 million in its first year, mostly through higher energy and food prices.

"People finally clued in on what 128 would mean to California's economy and what it would mean to California's environment, which is not much," says Scott MacDonald, who opposed the legislation. MacDonald says the bill failed to address smog, ground-

water contamination and toxic waste, which he says are California's true environmental culprits.

Failure of the initiative does not, however, mean that Californians are apathetic to a clean environment, says Richard Woodward, director of the anti-128 campaign. He believes the vote, "means that Californians are not willing to make faulty proposals a law of the state merely because they are called pro-environment by their promoters."

"Big Green" was sponsored by Assemblyman Tom Hayden (D-Santa Monica), and Atty. Gen. John Van de Kamp. Many motion picture and television personalities joined in the effort to pass the proposed bill, giving it high vis-

ibility among voters.

Hayden said efforts to protect the environment would be accelerated.

"We will get clean food, clean air, a clean ocean and government clean enough to stand up to the polluters in Sacramento," Hayden said. Prop 128 may reappear on ballots in two years.

"Big Green" would have provided \$300 million in bond funds to buy and preserve ancient redwood trees, curb auto and other emissions, banned oil development in state waters, and barred pesticides suspected of causing cancer.

Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop was among 128's opponents. Koop echoed the concern of other "Big Green" opponents, by saying the bill would increase food, gas and utility prices and eliminate jobs.

Also failing at the polls in California were Prop. 130, a forestry protection measure, and Prop. 135, a pesticide counter-initiative sponsored by the agricultural industry. □

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# NEWS BRIEFS

**DUDECK'S A GRANDDAD...**LM editorial advisor **Dr. A.E. Dudeck** (University of Florida) became a grandfather on Oct. 5th. Daughter Kathy Collart gave birth to Timothy Collart at 9:31 a.m. Dudeck says that waiting in the delivery room with son-in-law Dave, "brought back memories of 30 years ago; I felt like an expectant father again." Congratulations to the Dudeck family.

**PROMOTING SAFETY...**A new "ALCA Supervisor's Safety Handbook" is available from the Associated Landscape Contractors of America. The book covers safety policies, meetings, proper clothing, general first-aid, equipment certification, material handling and (are you listening?) chemical safety. The book is available to members for \$4; non-members can get it for \$20 (maybe it's time you joined...?). Contact ALCA at (703) 241-4004; order by fax at (703) 532-0463.

**TAKING CHARGE...**Harold Vaubel has been hired by Signal Landmark as golf course superintendent for Eagle Crest Country Club, now under construction in the hills of Escondido, Calif.

**IN COLLEGE, IN BUSINESS...**Word comes from Centerville, Ohio, about the business success of **Martin Grunder**, a college student who operates a thriving landscaping business. Grunder, a senior finance major at the University of Dayton, cleared \$300,000 in gross sales last summer. "I've operated my own business since I was in seventh grade," says Grunder, who began his business career as a grass cutter. Today, he employs about 10 workers. "The darn phone is ringing off the hook," Grunder says.

**SPEAKING OF GETTING CLIPPED...**Calgene Pacific of Melbourne, Australia, is nearing completion in the breeding of a blue rose. Latest research was to isolate the gene that makes other flowers blue. The blue hue is to be transferred into roses, gerberas, carnations and chrysanthemums. But does Calgene really think, as reported, that a blue rose will fetch \$100 per stem? Wake up and smell the roses! A Japanese firm has invested \$5 million into Calgene's other gene research that seeks to produce flowers that last longer in the vase. What might those cost?

## PEOPLE

# 'Dad' Gill passes away in Milwaukee

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin  
Harry Gill, a founder of the Sports Turf Managers Association and a friend to every athletic turf manager who ever raked an infield, died here of natural causes on Oct. 25.

"His passing represents a great loss to us individually and as an organization," notes Dale Keller Jr., executive director of the STMA. "Under his guiding hand, the association grew in membership and stature. Harry dedicated his life to making it a strong group with a main purpose to educate sports turf managers."

Gill, 69, was planning to retire on Nov. 1.

For the last 16 years of his life, Gill was superintendent of grounds and maintenance for the Milwaukee Brewers at County Stadium here and at Compadre Stadium in Chandler, Ariz. During those final 16 years, he won virtually every major turf award, including Sports Turf magazine's "Man of the Year" in 1990.

A press release from the Brewers aptly notes:

"To the Milwaukee Brewers, his friends and family, Harry Gill will be remembered affectionately as 'Dad,' a warm reception he often used when greeting someone he knew.

"Gill was soft-spoken, but was always able to captivate an audience, whether it was addressing a couple hundred at a convention or a couple in the Brewers' front office. A good-natured, friendly individual, he always found time to share a humorous tale with someone, usually leaving him with a smile. That's what made Harry Gill the king of the hill."

Gill was especially fond in recent years of telling audiences about his experience during the filming of "Major League" at County Stadium, and about his one-on-one conversations with



**HARRY C. GILL**  
1921-1990

such baseball notables as Henry Aaron.

As a tribute to his leadership, the Harry Gill Turf Scholarship was established in 1987 through the STMA.

Prior to joining the Brewers (where former assistant Gary Vanden Berg becomes his successor), the Milwaukee native was a groundskeeper and facilities director of a 45-hole golf course and 700-seat restaurant in Rockford, Ill.

Mary, his wife of 40 years, has requested that donations be made to the Gill Scholarship Fund or the local heart/diabetes funds or needy food programs.

—Jerry Roche □

## WATER

### Districts sign to save water

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Two Southern California water districts recently signed an agreement which will ease the drain on that region's evaporating water supply.

The Irrigation Association reports that the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California will pay the Imperial Irrigation

to page 15

# Illinois wetlands are facing extinction

ST. CHARLES, Ill. — The once-thriving Illinois prairie wetland is now a drop in the bucket, and a concerned landscape architect has taken steps to preserve what little remains.

"Nearly 90 percent of the wetlands that characterized the Illinois landscape when the earliest settlers arrived...are now gone," says Greg Stevens,

senior landscape architect/project manager with The Lannert Group here.

According to Stevens, widespread drainage and development are the two biggest causes of shrinking wetlands, which are now recognized more as vital and important ecological systems.

But controversy has arisen over what today con-

stitutes a wetland.

"Because it is impossible and ill-advised to completely stop development," says Stevens, "we have to find some better way to distinguish between those wetlands that should be preserved and those that add nothing tangible to the environment."

It is in education that Stevens says landscape ar-

chitects can play a useful role.

The government wildlife department describes wetland as having:

- hydrophytic vegetation, or plants typically found in wetland and other aquatic habitats;

- hydric soil, which is saturated, flooded or ponded during the growing

*to page 18*

## WATER from page 14

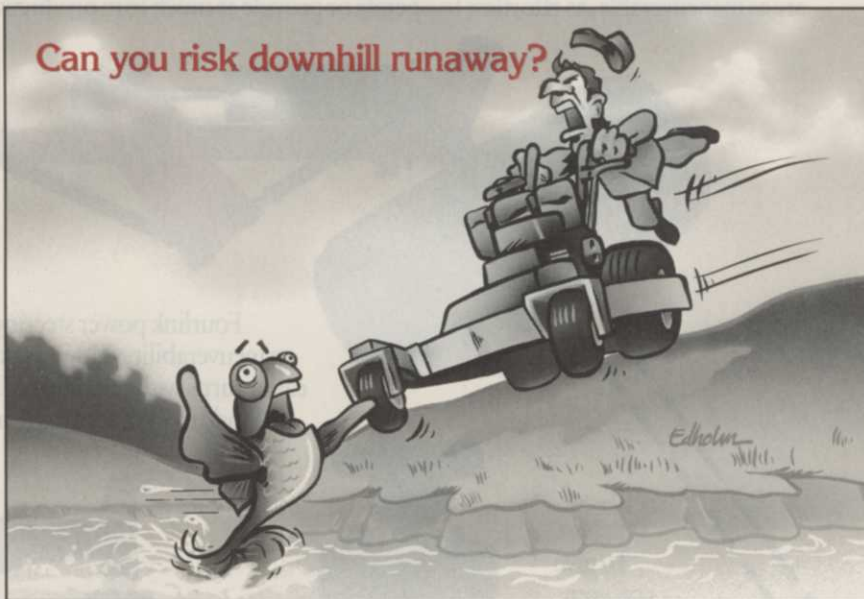
District about \$97 million to build conservation facilities in the agricultural district, and another \$23 million for indirect costs over the program's first five years. Another \$2.6 million will be paid annually to cover the Imperial Irrigation District's direct cost of the program.

Under the program, Metropolitan will finance 16 conservation projects in the Imperial Valley and, in turn, will receive an estimated 106,100 acre-feet of water per year that would be saved.

The projects include automated control structures, concrete lining of earthen irrigation canals and new reservoirs. The conserved water will remain in the Colorado River and be available for Metropolitan to import into its service area through its Colorado River Aquaduct.

Metropolitan provides water service to more than 14.7 million Southern Californians in six counties. Imperial delivers water from the Colorado River to agricultural users or about 500,000 acres farmland, in the fertile Imperial Valley.

According to Carl Boronkay, general manager of Metropolitan, "Implementation of this landmark water conservation endeavor between the farmers in the Imperial Valley and urban Southern California exemplifies the growing role water management and conservation will play in meeting (our) future water needs." □



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**ILLINOIS** from page 15  
season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part; and

● hydrology, which is the science of dealing with the properties, distribution and circulation of water.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires developers to obtain a permit before any dredging or fill activity occurs in property encroaching into a wetland.

"If the proposed development is found to impact the wetland area," explains Stevens, the landscape architect must devise an alternative layout or develop a plan that mitigates lost wetland to another on-site location."

To determine the exact

boundaries of wetland area, Stevens says The Lannert Group uses a wetland consultant, a soil scientist and a botanist.

That crew studies sites and makes the proper determination by using various factors:

● the amount of wetland vegetation present,

● the limits of the hydric soil and

● a computer-plot over a map or aerial photograph.

"This not only preserves an irreplaceable natural resource, but also achieves the highest and best possible use of that wetland," says Stevens. More people are able to enjoy the amenity, while its important ecological function has been retained." □

## EVENTS

### DECEMBER

**12-14: Pacific Coast Turf and Landscape Conference and Trade Show**, Washington State Convention and Trade Center, Seattle. Contact: Jones and Associates, Park Center, Suite 200, N. 908 Howard St., Spokane, WA 992-01-2261; (509) 327-5904.

**13-14: New England Arborists Exposition**, Sheraton Inn and Conference Center, Boxborough, Mass. Contact: Elizabeth Collins, Massachusetts Arborists Association, 288 Walnut St., Suite 300, Newton, MA 02160; (617) 332-8683.

### JANUARY

**4-6: Mid-Atlantic Nurserymen's Trade Show**, Baltimore Convention Center. Contact: P.O. Box 314, Perry Hall, MD 21128.

**7-9: Maryland Turfgrass Council Conference & Trade Show**, Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor. Contact: Cheryl Gaultney, Michigan Turfgrass Council, 12 Pressie Lane, Churchville, MD 21028.

**9: Sacramento Valley Landscape & Nursery Expo**, Sacramento Community Convention Center. Contact: Patti Adkins, (916) 729-2606.

**13-18: National Institute of Golf Management**, Oglebay Park Resort and Conference Center, Wheeling, W.V. Contact: NIGM, Wheeling Park Commission, Oglebay, Wheeling WV 26003, or Department of Continuing Education at Oglebay, (800) 624-6988.

**14-16: Great Lakes Nursery & Landscape Trade Show**, Amway Grand Plaza Hotel and Grand Center, Grand Rapids, MI. Contact: Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association, 819 N. Washington Ave., Suite 2, Lansing, MI 48906; (517) 487-1282.

**14-17: Virginia Turf and Landscape Conference & Trade Show**, Richmond Centre and Richmond Marriott, Richmond, Va. Contact: Randeem Tharp, (804) 340-3473.

**14-17: University of Maryland Advanced Turfgrass IPM Short Course**, College Park, Md. Contact: Lee Hellman, (310) 454-7130.

## ATHLETIC TURF

### Rebuilding and resodding

Vicnor Farms of Connoquenessing, Pa. uses an innovative method of installing athletic fields.

The company strips off existing vegetation, tills, and adds lime, fertilizer and soil amendments. Fields are graded and sodded with a bluegrass blend.

Vicnor says the soil amendments loosen tight soils, reducing future soil compaction. Another amendment reduces the frequency of irrigation. According to Vicnor, amending the existing soil rather than using a sand base reduces divots caused by athletic cleats. Fields are playable in four to six weeks.

Vicnor Farms, which will consult with schools in maintaining rebuilt fields, is located at Box 227, Connoquenessing, PA 16027. Its phone number is (412) 789-7811.

### Natural turf in domes

Technology for installing and maintaining natural turf athletic fields in domed stadiums and other indoor facilities is now available from the Greenway Group of Horsham, Pa.

Greenway, says **Thomas L. Ripley Sr.**, has a patent pending on the Integrated Turf Management (ITM) System, which can also be used over existing artificial surfaces.

ITM provides the first transportable natural turfgrass system, complete with an all-new greenspec lightweight growing medium. The system, which **Dr. Henry Indyk** of Rutgers University helped develop, weighs a fraction of typical growing alternatives. ITM systems also can be interchanged to meet the demand of the sports activity.

For more information, contact Greenway at (215) 343-0110.

### Brochure is offered

**Dr. Bruce Augustin** and **Art Wick** of Lesco, Inc. have authored a new brochure entitled "Athletic Field Turf Maintenance Handbook." The 12-page brochure gives specifications for a variety of athletic fields. To receive a copy, call the Sports Turf Managers Association at (702) 739-8052 or Lesco at (800) 825-3726.