

OPEI spins EXPO web

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute now reports the latest on its Expo 97 show when you visit the new EXPO web site: <http://EXPO.mow.org>.

OPEI reports the home page is designed to give an overview of EXPO, with links to more in-depth information by show categories. Included at the site are a listing of all the power and manually-operated products on display at the Louisville show, and a listing of seminars planned for the three-day event. The attendee section features all the highlights of EXPO 97, including daily schedules, Sunday night concert information, hotel lists and pre-registration information. A special section has been written for exhibitors, with exhibit rates and an application for exhibit space.

The Expo is scheduled for July 26 through July 28, 1997. For more information, visit the web site. If you're not on the net yet, call (502) 562-1962. □

Three associations join to train 'ambassadors'

The GCSAA has joined up with Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) in a public outreach effort called the "Ambassador Speakers Program." Goal of the program is to motivate and prepare industry representatives to educate the public about the green industry's environmental benefits and to address consumer concerns. A day-long training session was held in Cincinnati, Ohio, recently for 16 representatives. The pilot program has enlisted eight lawn care operators and eight golf course superintendents from Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Following the training, each Ambassador agreed to give presentations on industry and consumer issues to civic, community and school groups in 1997.

"We teach the basics, but the basics count: how to prepare an outline from a presentation, how to get rid of the butterflies, how to prepare a speech," explains Elizabeth Lawder, RISE communications director. "Our goal is to have about 60 ambassadors."

"We start with a little background, but we want to give a vocational [message] as well," says PLCAA President, Terry Kurth of Barefoot Grass, Madison, Wis. "What we're after is to try to get people in a high school group to get interested in the green

industry," says Kurth. "Realistically, they are our future employees, our future customers and they could be the future regulators."

"I have spoken to high school classes in my area about what I do for a living," says Kurth, "and it's amazing to hear the positive comments from students after they learn about the benefits of the green industry. This type of program will prepare our industry to talk to a wide variety of groups and will positively influence our industry's public image."

"As an association, we have put a premium on enhancing the image of the golf course superintendent," says Bruce Williams, CGCS, Bob O' Link Golf Club, Chicago. "I believe it is important to communicate to both golfers and non-golfers the positive impact that green industry professionals have on the environment. This program not only provides a vehicle to communicate that message, but helps create and reinforce the positive image of environmental stewardship to which we adhere."

The groups are seeking engagements for speakers in Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Anyone who knows of a school or civic group that would be willing to hear about the benefits of healthy turf is asked to call Debbie Rudin at (309) 691-2041. □

USGA turf info on the Web

The USGA's Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) now appears on the World Wide Web. The site contains turfgrass research data and management literature. Find it at: www.lib.msu.edu/tgif.

GCSAA: super certification program turns 25

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is in the 25th year of its certification program.

The goal of the program has always been to maintain a comprehensive curriculum of study for member superintendents including: turfgrass management; pest control; safety and compliance; financial management; and organizational management.

To qualify, individuals must be currently employed as a golf course superintendent, have completed a level of post-secondary education, possess superintendent experience and pursue GCSAA seminar continuing education units. The applicant then has one year to complete a comprehensive, six-part exam and go through the attesting process.

The GCSAA membership figure recently topped the 16,000 mark.

"This growth in membership not only mirrors the overall growth of the game, but also reflects our industry's commitment to professionalism," says GCSAA President, Bruce R. Williams, CGCS, of Bob O' Link Golf Club, Highland Park, Ill.

For more information on steps toward certification, contact the GCSAA at (913) 841-2240.