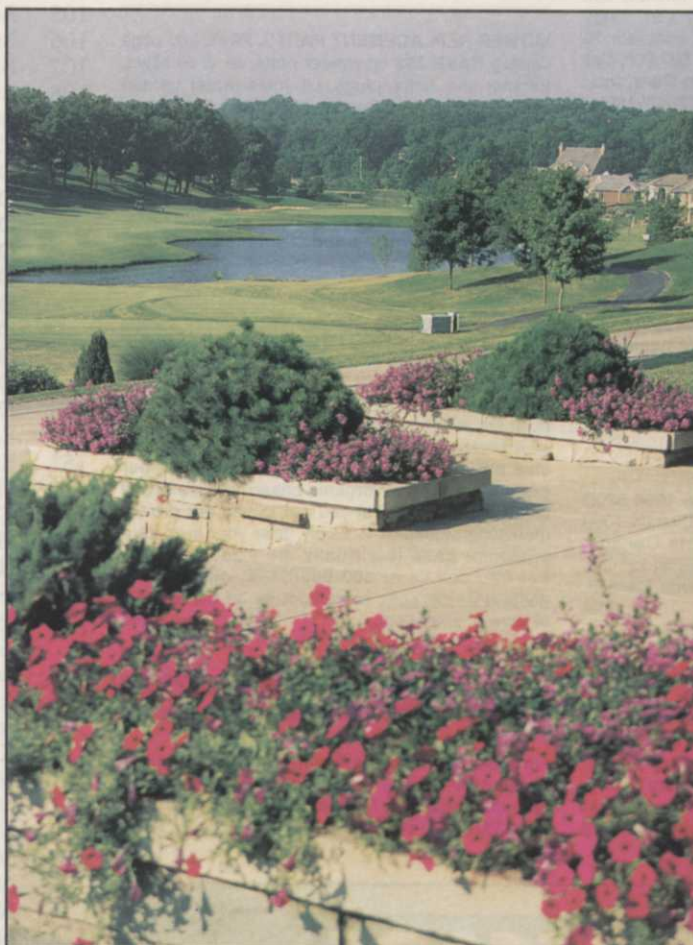


# Grab Bag

## How to dominate your competition

Sandy Queen, CGCS, who heads up the Golf Division for the City of Overland Park, Kan., has a four-part program that he says has made their course the busiest one around:

1. Identify your management team. It takes a true team to determine your niche in the market.
  2. Study the competition. List their strengths and weaknesses, and know all the fees they charge.
  3. Develop a 10-year plan that will strengthen your position in that part of the market.
  4. Have a strong customer service program. People want to play where they are treated best, says Queen. Use surveys to set benchmarks for measuring customer service efforts.
- Sandy presented these tips at the last GCSAA show.



## Color, color, and more color.

Highland Springs Country Club, Springfield, MO, is one beautiful place thanks, in part, to Linda Lindsey, ornamental supervisor there. She's continually adding new beds at the Club. She's partial to plants like *Coreopsis Moonbeam*, *Veronica Sunny Border Blue* and *Russian Sage*, but, because they require little deadheading she also plants thousands of *vinca*, *zinnia angustifolia*, *verbena bonariensis*, *Lantana*, *scaveola*, *caladiums* and some varieties of sun-tolerant *coleus*. She grows her own annuals at her home greenhouses.

PHOTO BY LESLEE JAQUETTE

## Tree inventory up at West Coast nursery

Miramar Wholesale Nurseries, San Diego, Calif., a division of Landtrends, recently acquired Vista Hill Nursery, which has unique varieties of flowering trees.

Examples of those varieties are *Chionathus retusus*; *Alectryon excelsum*; and *Chionathus retusus*.

Landtrends/Miramar President Jon Ewing reports that Vista Hill's former co-owner, Bob Everett, will join the Miramar company in production and sales capacities.

## News on controlling summer decline

Dr. Joseph Vargas, turfgrass pathologist at Michigan State University, spoke at a press conference sponsored by Rhone-Poulenc and reported on the excellent results achieved by Chipco 26 GT and Aliette Signature in regards to summer decline management. Vargas said that an added, and somewhat unexpected result, of his tests was a noticeable improvement and faster recovery in the treated turf.



## Get employees to fit in

As you try to retain good employees, re-examine how you hire new ones.

"We shifted our focus several years ago," says Eric Cross, president of Duke's Landscape Management, Hackettstown, NJ.

"We work a lot harder on hiring the right people the first time. When we know they'll fit in and share our commitment to service, then we can look at keeping them productive and happy."

Grab Bag features brief observations and prognostications throughout the green industry. If you have an unusual photo or comment you'd like to share with us, please send it in...