

Grab Bag

Dr. Pat Cobb takes new path

Dr. Pat Cobb retired in mid-January as Professor of Extension Entomology at Auburn University, Auburn, AL, but she probably won't be slowing down. Pat had been in the position for 21 years.

"I've had the best of all worlds," Pat told LM a week before her retirement from Auburn, where she had also earned her masters and doctorate degrees. "I've gotten to teach some and get back into the classroom a little bit. I've gotten to research and I've gotten to do extension and the reason I've gotten to do that is because I didn't have a research counterpart and I was afraid that I wouldn't have something to tell folks."

Dr. Cobb insisted she's going to remain in the industry. In fact, most of her first month of retirement promised to be busy, including a stint helping out at Penn State University and a speaking engagement for the Florida Turfgrass Association.

"I'm a bug person and I want to get back to being an entomologist," said Pat, who insisted she's going to remain very active in the green industry—at least for a few more years.

Have mowers, will work

Mark Silva has paraplegia; Bob Clendenin and Steve Ford have quadriplegia. All three are successful landscape professionals through the use of modified zero-radius mowers.

Clendenin's career started several years ago when he approached Larry Boellner of A.J. Boellner, Inc., a Grasshopper mower dealer in Maumee, Ohio. Boellner hesitated to sell Clendenin a mower, but he relented after Clendenin insisted on a test drive which he accomplished with surprising efficiency.

"After we made sure he could operate the controls properly, he took off," remembered Boellner. After a few modifications to the mower, Bob Clendenin was off and running.

"It's the best thing that ever came along for Bob," said his mother, Linda Clendenin. "Now, it's like he has a new purpose, and he's excited to get up in the mornings to get to work." Bob's ability to operate the mower and his willingness to work long hours have provided him with as many customers as he can service.

Inspired by Clendenin's success, longtime friend Steve Ford is also realizing his dream of owning and operating a custom lawn mowing business in northwest Ohio. Ford was selected as the subject of the program to modify a Grasshopper zero-radius mower for use by an individual with quadriplegia. The mower was equipped with a five-point harness, a dry chemical suppression system in the engine compartment, a modified seat and extended control arms.

In North Attleboro, MA, Mark Silva is a common sight operating his zero-radius mower. Silva, who has paraplegia, mows with a 48-inch cutting deck in season, loads and removes leaves in the fall and plows snow in his neighborhood in the winter. "I'm able to transfer onto the (mower's) deck from my wheelchair easily," said Silva.



Mark Silva and his modified mower

GIE Emerald Awards Draw

Your votes really do count. The two days of the GIE Show in Nashville brought in a lot of entries for our Emerald Award choices for 1999. As promised, we drew one name for each day of the show, for a \$150 prize. The winners are:

• Thomas Tarbox of Tarbox

Landscaping, Yorktown, NY

• Kenny Sprague of Sprague's Lawn Service, Inc. of Ligonier, IN.

Thanks to everyone for their votes. For those of you who weren't at the show or didn't fill out a ballot with your Emerald Award choices, check out the ballot on page 80 of LM and mail or fax it in.

We're offering even more money — \$500. You could be a winner too!

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...