

In the Know

BUSINESS

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Louisville Bats mix baseball with lawn care

BY RON HALL / Editor in Chief

LOUISVILLE, KY — Do you think your clients might be impressed if they knew that the guy taking care of their property was a trained professional sports turf groundskeeper?

The owners of the Triple-A Louisville Bats baseball team think they will, and since they brought Aaron Boggs on board in March 2006, they're more convinced than ever that's the case. Boggs, the former head groundskeeper at nearby University of Louisville, brought a ton of enthusiasm and lots of turf knowledge to the organization. Now that he's getting better grounded in the business end of commercial grounds care, the company, 4-year-old Homefield Advantage Turf Care, is starting to become a player here.

"We're unusual as a lawn care company because of the number of people we have who have earned degrees in turfgrass or horticulture," says Boggs, himself a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University.


But what really sets Homefield Advantage apart is its working relationship with Louisville Bats, in particular its award-winning head groundskeeper Tom Nielsen. Indeed, while their responsibilities are different, Boggs and Nielsen, report to the same owners and work in adjacent office spaces in beautiful Slugger Field near downtown Louisville.

That relationship, fostered on a long-time

friendship of the two turf pros, gives Homefield Advantage's four fulltime employees access to Nielsen's knowledge and some specialized (and expensive) turf care equipment. This has allowed Homefield Advantage, which put on six seasonal workers this past season, to offer a range of services — from chemical lawn care to property maintenance and renovation — while keeping capital expenses in line. At least for now. Continued growth is definitely in the books, says Boggs.

Relying, at least in part, of the baseball team's name and marketing clout, Boggs says demand for the company's services are exceeding expectations, and he will add another fulltime employee to start the season.

"Our goal is to provide the best agronomic service that we can, whether it's a home lawn or the sports fields at the local school," he adds. "We're going to bring the same products that we use at Slugger Field to our customers' properties."



General Manager
Aaron Boggs said
customers love
using real turf pros.

New Komatsu Zenoah HQ

LAWRENCEVILLE, GA — RedMax/Komatsu Zenoah America moved its U.S. headquarters to Lawrenceville, GA, from its previous location in Norcross. The Lawrenceville building will provide plenty of office space, nearly double the previous warehouse space, and room to accommodate the company's planned growth.

Snow pros get CSP study guide

ERIE, PA — SIMA is set to unveil a comprehensive study guide for prospective Certified Snow Professionals. "We have worked with volunteer CSPs and an outside consultant to create a complete study guide that will help snow and ice management professionals prepare for the only national certification in the industry," said Julie Seggi, SIMA training coordinator. Visit www.sima.org.

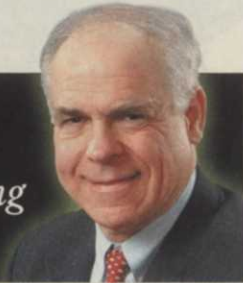
Pesticide law now in effect

Oregon lawn care companies and others who use herbicides and pesticides to control vegetation and pests, are now required to electronically provide the State Department of Agriculture with information about the type of chemicals used, the quantity and where they are applied. The state's Pesticide Use Reporting System went into effect on Jan. 1. It's expected the legislature will extend its lifespan beyond the original sunset date in '09.

[CLIPPINGS]

In the Know

LEGALLY Speaking



BY KENNETH D. MORRIS, ESQ. L.L.C.

Q I plan to expand my operations to another state this year. Is the trademark or trade name on my company's name national? Or does it only apply locally?

A Your company's name is a trade-name. While a trademark is used to identify and distinguish the trademark owner's goods from those of another and to indicate the source of the goods, a trade name means any name used by a person or business to identify his business. Trade names cannot be registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. If you meet the tests to register your company's name as a trademark, i.e. that it is distinctive as established by the evidence, you should register the trademark before expanding its use to another state.

Q The trucks we use have a very distinctive logo involving color and design. Can we protect them so no competitor can copy that design on its trucks?

A Yes. Assuming there is no prior conflict, you may be able to register the design as a trademark logo.

Kenneth D. Morris, a Philadelphia-based attorney with more than 30 years corporate and law firm experience, offers information on industry legal issues in each issue of LM. Contact him via www.kenmorrislaw.com.

Note: The above should not be interpreted as offering legal advice in any jurisdiction where such practice is not authorized. Engage competent counsel familiar with your jurisdiction when legal issues arise.

Brickman completes recapitalization

GAITHERSBURG, MD — The Brickman Group closed on a recapitalization of the company on January 23. Brickman is the largest landscape maintenance company in the United States, approaching annual revenues of \$500 million.

The transaction was undertaken to provide an exit strategy for CIVC Partners, Brickman's private equity partner since 1998, and to refinance Brickman's public bonds. The recapitalization gives the company more favorable private debt, said the company.

The family will continue to run the business, says Scott Brickman, CEO and president.

"Nine years is a long time to be partners with a private equity group like CIVC," Scott Brickman, CEO and president of the company, told *Landscape Management*. The relationship lasted so long because both partners — Brickman and CIVC, based in Chicago — had established an excellent relationship, he said.

To facilitate the recent recapitaliza-

tion, Brickman brought in Los Angeles-based Leonard Green & Partners, a new private equity partner.

"We went through an exhaustive process to find a new partner like CIVC who shared our values and we are thrilled to have selected Leonard Green," said Brickman.

After the transaction Leonard Green will own slightly less than 50% of the equity leaving the Brickman family, management and existing stockholders with a majority interest.

"This transaction will not have any effect on Brickman's leadership, operations or strategic plans," stressed Brickman.

"Following this transaction, nothing will change with regards to our operations or the direction of our business in any way. I, along with the leadership here at the company, will continue to run the company as we have for many years pursuing our vision of building strong teams, which provide outstanding quality and service to our customers."

EPA revises pesticide applicator rules

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has begun developing revisions to federal pesticide applicator certification and training regulations. First enacted in the mid-1970s, the rules have changed little over the last 30-plus years and now practically every state's pesticide application certification and training requirements exceed the federal standard.

EPA last year issued discussion papers touching on the issues that a proposal updating the federal certification and training regulation would address including: expanding the scope of the regulation to cover the use of general use prod-

ucts by commercial applicators and not-for-hire applicators; setting a competency gauge for commercial applicators and other occupational users of pesticides; standardizing requirements; revising the definition of "under the direct supervision;" establishing a minimum age for pesticide applicators; and modifying recertification requirements.

EPA officials stated in November that a proposed rule would likely be issued in December of 2008. Sometime this year the EPA is expected to update discussion papers and will use the feedback it receives on those documents to begin drafting the rule.

In the Know

Tips for keeping your equipment fleet productive + profitable

Healthy equipment that runs efficiently and achieves top production is the hallmark of a profitable large-equipment fleet. To achieve this goal, equipment must be effectively maintained at the lowest cost. The following tips from John Deere Service Marketing Manager Diego Navarro helps equipment fleet managers accomplish maximum productivity and uptime while minimizing costs.

Condition-based maintenance. Condition-based maintenance requires proactive action based on the machines condition. Technicians read the health of the machine and provide services based on that information. Techniques of condition-based maintenance include a complete oil analysis and a root cause analysis.

"Root cause analysis helps us get to what is really causing the problem. It's treating the disease instead of just relieving the symptoms," said Navarro.

Particle counts and filtration. Hydraulic system filtration is vital to extend the component life of any machine. Technicians initially determine the particle count by examining the oil for foreign particles. Then, filtration can take place

to reach the target.

"You may need to use bypass filtration, which is an aftermarket product. An on-site filtration caddy, on the other hand, can clean the hydraulics very fast while you're performing other services. The bypass will take two or three weeks to reach that cleanliness," Navarro said.

Another technique, magnetic filtration, is effective for components such as axles, and primarily used to capture iron particles.

"Iron (can) damage veins, oxidize the oil and consume the additive," Navarro said. "When you change oils, not all the iron goes out."

Proper lubrication. Mixing lubricants is a risk machine owners won't want to take.

"When your machine needs more oil, and you simply add any product you find instead of sticking with what's already being used in the machine, you are instantly changing the formulation," Navarro said. "This

A technician cleans an excavator's hydraulic reservoir with a Super Caddy filter to extend component life.



can often affect the machine negatively and accelerate wear."

Mixing lubricants can cause copper generation. Copper comes from bronze, an alloy used in all high-pressure systems in the pumps. If copper leaches from the pump's bronze, alloys weaken and pump efficiency suffers, resulting in contamination of the system and components.

▼ Electronic machine information download. One useful tool to maximize uptime and keep operating costs as low as



possible is a system that allows for electronic machine download. Machines with this type of system can record up to 10,000 hours of operation information, from fuel

consumption to pressures and temperature and more. For example, this kind of data can be retrieved from John Deere excavators using a tool called Machine Information Center, Navarro said.

"Machine Information Center is vital to keeping costs in line," he said. "It helps you determine how much time your operator spends idling or working, or when the way he is operating the machine is wearing out the tracks. The result is hours and hours of information that can really help the fleet supervisor manage cost and maintenance."



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Prepare now for the spring growing season



While not thought of as a gardening month, February can include a few yard and garden activities. There are plenty of things to do in anticipation of spring and the 2007 growing season.

If the weather is acceptable, start the process of pruning apple trees. Apples should be pruned on a regular basis to keep them productive, and February through early April is a good time to do it. Other trees and shrubs can be pruned, but be careful. Don't prune spring blooming shrubs because flower buds were formed last season. Cut them off and the shrubs will not produce flowers this spring.

Even so, old, neglected spring-flowering shrubs often require extensive pruning to rejuvenate or renew the plants. The best time to rejuvenate large, overgrown shrubs is late winter or early spring. While heavy pruning in late winter or early spring will reduce or eliminate the flower display for a few years, the long term health of the shrubs is more important.

February is also a good time to look for branches that are broken or crossing each other, those that are too low or growing into buildings. As weather conditions get

warmer, these limbs can be removed.

— Information courtesy of University of Nebraska-Extension. For more, visit <http://lancaster.unl.edu>

Connecticut town goes pesticide free

PLAINVILLE, CT — This city of 17,000 people located about 15 miles southwest of Hartford is going pesticide free on its city property — all 167 acres. The town council on Jan. 10 voted to accept the recommendation of the 11-member Plainville Conservation Commission to quit using pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.

In addition, the town council is asking homeowners with property near the Quinnipiac and Pequabuck Rivers to quite using pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.

Plainville is reportedly the second town in Connecticut to try to maintain public property without synthetic products.

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BY DAVID FRABOTTA / Senior Editor, *Golfdom*

Charting a course for growth

Deborah Hamlin takes helm of Irrigation Association

SHE PERSEVERED OVER A FIELD OF 80 CANDIDATES to capture the executive director post of the Irrigation Association. But it won't be the biggest challenge for Deborah Hamlin as she leads a "fragmented" and a growing Irrigation Association, which bid farewell to retired head Thomas Kimmell.

We sat down with Hamlin to talk about her goals and vision for the association, which is based in Falls Church, VA. She's a certified association executive and the former executive director for the International Association of Plastics Distributors, which she ran for 10 years. During her tenure, she developed a comprehensive educational program, grew membership, reorganized the volunteer structure to streamline projects and bolstered participation at association meetings.



Q Why was IA a good fit for you?

I worked for an industry association that was basically manufacturers and distributors for the past 10 years, so that certainly helps my understanding of the business and the way things are manufactured and distributed. What I'm trying to learn more about are some of the technical issues and some of the political issues.

I'm very familiar with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America — and I know we've had a long-term relationship with them — but I'm hoping that my connections there and my existing relationships will help build a stronger relationship.

Q What is top of mind for you begin in this role? One of the biggest things is the fact that we're partnering with EPA and its WaterSense program. The first rollout of this WaterSense program is individual certifications. (In 2007), they are going to roll out product certifications, where you would label a product like you would an Energy Star product, except for water conservation.

We're hoping that all of our landscape and golf exams will be EPA endorsed. So if a person passed an IA program that has been approved, then the EPA will allow them to put a label on their business cards and brochures to prove that they are using water-saving techniques in their day-to-day business. That's pretty cool.

Q What are your main goals in the short term of your tenure?

One of my personal goals is to grow our relationships with our affiliate organizations. There are hundreds of irrigation associations and turf and landscape associations out there; 50 of them currently pay membership dues to us.

So we have a staff person that currently is traveling around and meeting with those people; it's been an emphasis for about a year now. But I'd like to formalize the relationship and benefits for those members.

Q What will be your biggest challenges?

Serving our diverse members. I was drawn to the industry association because you can do much more with more people and because you have the voice of everyone, but when you have everyone, each segment wants to be different. So we're in the process of coming up with programs and services to cater to each of them. We can no longer just give the same information to everybody. But electronically, we can individualize our approach. It's one-to-one marketing; we can figure out what one person gets out of the organization and then market that to them.

Q How does IA want to be seen by irrigation professionals? All of the contractors, especially on the landscape side, are very fragmented. They have a lot of different associations that they

belong to on a state and local level.

I would love for them to look to us as a resource and as a leader in education, specifically in training and testing.

Q What are you most excited about in taking this position?

There is so much potential. It's a small community of people, but they are so intertwined by the water issue that it certainly makes membership in the organization sellable because you have this common goal among so many different types of companies.

The other thing that I love about this group is that they are very engaged. Maybe because it's all cause related and people feel good about what they are doing, but they are working hard at getting things done.

Also, many members are going through an evolution. A lot of them are family businesses in their second and third generations, and the next generations have different ways of looking at things; they want something out of this organization in return as opposed to some of their parents who were members to network or because it was the right thing to do.

Members now are looking for different things from the organization, and I'm excited to come in during that transition so I can help provide those new benefits.

Q How will you ensure that IA's certification program is a premium credential? I envision a certification board for the industry where it is an umbrella, and we acknowledge all of the certifications out there under one body.

In conjunction, there needs to be some sort of training and assessment at the lower level, and I think we are missing that. The certification board is looking at that to determine whether it is their role, and if so, is there a market for that, or should that be something that stays on the education side of things?

People & companies

John Deere Landscapes, John Deere Golf & Turf One Source and the company's professional mowing segment will now come under the direction of **David Werning**, president of John Deere Landscapes and senior vice president, commercial segment, John Deere C&CE.



Phil Burkart, vice president and general manager of **The Toro Co.**'s irrigation division, was asked to serve on the Irrigation Association's Board of Directors.

Harvey Massey, owner of Orlando, FL's **Massey Services**, and his wife Carol donated \$1 million to the Dr. P. Phillips Orlando Performing Arts Center, a proposed facility in downtown Orlando.

Arsenault Associates announced that **David L. Reed** has joined the company as Fleet Management Consultant. Reed brings more than 20 years of fleet maintenance and technology experience to the newly created position.



Amy Briones has been named branch manager of **Greater Texas Landscape Services'** new office in San Antonio.



Matthew Wilson has been promoted to service and compliance manager at **RedMax/Komatsu Zenoah America**. He will be responsible for the company's service, warranty and emissions compliance.

Ron Wolfarth, director of **Rain Bird's** landscape irrigation division, was named to the board of directors for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Alliance for Water Efficiency.

The Broyhill Co. of Dakota City, NE, named **Lee Stone**, senior product and division manager for Golf and Turf Equipment.

Charlie Lockerson has been named manager of **Horizon Landscape & Design** in Vero Beach, FL.



R. Douglas Cowan stepped down as chief executive officer of **The Davey Tree Expert Co.** at the end of 2006. Taking his place is **Karl J. Warnke**, who serves as president and CEO.

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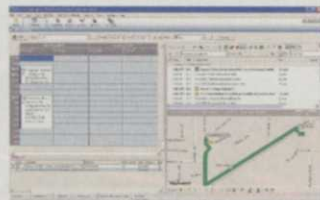


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In the Know

Water district limits lawn irrigation to one day a week

BROOKSVILLE, FL — The Southwest Florida Water Management District executive director recently declared a water shortage and restricted lawn watering to one day a week in the 16 counties in the district, including the portion of Marion County west of Interstate 75, according to the Star-Banner in Ocala, FL.

The restrictions will be in effect from Jan. 16 until July 31, unless rescinded or modified. The limits are being imposed because of low rainfall levels, which are affecting river flows and surface and groundwater levels.

As of Dec. 31, the districtwide average rainfall deficit is about 11.6 in.

Lack of rain limits watering to once a week.

"Our rivers are clearly being impacted like that of our lakes and groundwater system," said David Moore, SWFWMD's executive director. "We are very early in our typical dry season. Conditions are already low. We are asking for everyone's assistance in these six to seven months we anticipate this water shortage condition. We are asking the general public to really try to conserve as we move forward to this dry season."



[CLIPPINGS]

Toro delivers Disney vacation

RIVERSIDE, CA — Two lucky Toro Irrigation customers will soon be going to the Magic Kingdom. Suzanne Heimbuch, commercial account manager for Choate Irrigation, and Shanon Holden, owner of Lubbock Turf Irrigation, were the winners of Toro Irrigation's Walt Disney World Resort Vacation Giveaway at the 2006 International Irrigation Show in San Antonio. Toro is the official provider of turf maintenance equipment for Walt Disney World Resort.

Horiculture degree from UI

URBANA, IL — In fall 2006, the University of Illinois began partnering with Chicago area community and city colleges to offer a bachelors degree in horticulture. Students who have completed an associate degree can complete their final two years of coursework and earn a bachelors degree from U of I at Urbana-Champaign — without relocating. For information, call 800-252-1360 or visit www.nres.uiuc.edu.

Minnesota Expo biggest ever

MINNEAPOLIS — The Minnesota Green Expo is one of the fastest-growing green industry trade shows and educational conferences in the U.S. The expo hosted 8,004 registered attendees Jan. 3-5. The show is presented annually by the Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association and the Minnesota Turf & Grounds Foundation.

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