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GREENING NEWSLETTER

Is Brown the New Green for Golf Courses?

When Jim Hyler was inaugurated as president of the U.S. Golf Association this year, he surprised many by speaking out more forcibly than USGA presidents are wont to do on a controversial subject—water usage and the misguided perception that golf courses need to be lush, green and perfect to be good. It is the issue, he said, “that is perhaps of greatest concern to golf’s future.”

With recent heavy flooding in Nashville and a pesky 17th green surrounded by water at the Players Championship in Florida all over TV, the shortage of water may not be at the top of every golfer’s mind. But for many golf courses in Southern California, Nevada, Arizona and the dry Southwest, it’s an existential threat. For others, even when water is abundant, maintaining wall-to-wall greensward in impeccable shape is creating a heavy and unnecessary financial burden. Verdant courses require more mowing, more chemicals to prevent weeds and disease, more general tweaking and fluffing and more days of those dreaded words “cart path only.”

“In my opinion, many of the standards by which we construct and maintain our courses have become, quite simply, unsustainable,” Mr. Hyler said. “With the recent economic downturn, focus on these critical issues has sharpened. If we are not careful, high construction costs, soaring maintenance budgets and declining membership rosters will threaten the survival of many courses and clubs.” He called for a “reset” in the way golfers look at and think about courses, with “playability” replacing aesthetics as the primary consideration. Playability, he said, “should include concepts of firm, fast, and yes, even brown, and allow the running game to flourish. We need to understand how brown can become the new green.”

Brown isn’t a popular concept in most clubhouses, but fun certainly is. One of the main points Mr. Hyler made in an interview was that firm, fast courses are more fun to play than soft, overwatered ones. Drives roll out farther. Approach shots into greens can, at the player’s option, scoot along the ground and bank off contours designed by the architects.

Green looks great on television, Mr. Hyler acknowledged, but that’s a major cause of the problem—televised golf distorts expectations. “Most people don’t realize that the courses on TV are manicured to peak for that one week. Even they don’t look that way all the time,” he said. “There’s nothing wrong with a little brownish tint to the fairways or some less-than-pristine conditioning. The last 20% of the maintenance budget at most clubs goes for appearance only.”

Starting last summer, viewers saw a change at some of the tournaments the USGA sponsors. In preparing Pebble Beach for the US Open in June, crews carefully limited the amount of water the turf received to create firmer, faster fairways than in previous Opens there. The course appeared notably browner and less manicured.

Chambers Bay, a county-owned course on the shore of Puget Sound near Tacoma, is in many ways a poster child for sustainable golf. Routed through dunes on the site of a former sand and gravel mine, it encompasses 250 acres—but thanks to large buffer areas and forced carries, only 85 of those acres are maintained as turfgrass, compared to 110 acres to 150 acres at typical courses. Moreover, all the grass on both greens and fairways is fine fescue, a tough, drought-tolerant strain widely found on links courses in the British Isles (but different from the devilish taller fescue strains US golfers are familiar with in the rough at some courses). Its roots reach—and sip water—eight inches to 12 inches below ground. Traditional cool-weather golf-course grasses (the most common are rye and Kentucky bluegrass) dip only two inches to five inches deep and thus have to receive water almost daily.

“We’ve gone as long as 15 days without watering the fairways,” said David Wienecke, the course superintendent. He estimates that the water bill at Chambers Bay is one-third to one-half what the bill at a nearby course planted in traditional grasses would be.

Fine fescue has its drawbacks. It doesn’t grow well in many places (the Bandon Dunes golf resort down the coast in Oregon may be the only other all-fescue facility in the US), and it loses density under lots of foot and cart traffic. But fescue also makes a terrific playing surface. “The ball sits up beautifully in the fairway and I can make the greens as fast as the USGA needs them,” Mr. Wienecke said.

The firm conditions at Chambers Bay allow golfers to engage their imagination. Roughly half the greens have possible hole locations that require players to land their approach shots off the putting surface, if they hope to get the ball close. “That’s where the fun begins,” said Bruce Charlton, part of the Robert Trent Jones II team that designed the course. A front left pin on the downhill, par-three ninth, for example, is best reached by caroming the tee shot off a high kicker slope to the left.



But as a demonstration of what’s possible with limited water and a minimalist maintenance philosophy, Chambers Bay is a welcome counterexample to the fake-green alternate reality portrayed weekly on PGA Tour broadcasts and each year at the Masters. This model is particularly important for communities in the Southwest that will have to make many tough decisions about golf in the years ahead.

“Areas facing severe water pressure have to constantly ask themselves what’s the best economic use of every gallon of water,” said Greg Lyman, head of the Environmental Institute for Golf, the philanthropic arm of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Golf has a continuing role to

play. It creates jobs and wealth. Increasingly it will have to compete for every ounce of water it uses, and avoid becoming a whipping boy for environmentalists.

"The more that non-golfers understand golf is environmentally responsible and is being managed for the long-term, the brighter its future will be," Mr. Lyman said. That's true in the Southwest, but also in areas where water isn't such an urgent issue. Chambers Bay doesn't lack for rainfall. But using less of everything—water, fertilizers, fuel and man-hours for maintenance—plays well pretty much anywhere.

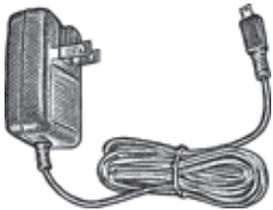
Newport, John Paul, *Golf Journal*, "Is Brown the New Green?," *The Wall Street Journal*, May 8-9, 2010

LEFT-BEHIND CHARGERS

Hotel guests have left all manner of personal items behind in rooms—pillows, false teeth, chocolate-covered ants and a book on how to improve your memory. But nothing compares with mobile-device chargers. The Fairmont Waterfront in Vancouver, British Columbia, has acquired about 300 of them. The Fairmont San Jose, CA, is left with about 250 chargers a year. Maids at the Fairmont St. Andrews in Scotland find as many as 35 a month still plugged into wall outlets. They're easy to miss when you're doing a last-minute scan of the room.

Hotel lost-and-found bins are overflowing with mobile chargers from cell phones, Blackberrys, iPhones and assorted other gizmos. All 45 of the Omni Hotels in North America have charger "graveyards," with a typical hotel having two bins full at any time. Las Vegas' Main Street Station Casino Hotel has five bins containing more than 400 chargers.

Why chargers? For starters, they are dark-colored and affixed to out-of-the-way outlets. The other problem is that so many people carry so many devices that require their own power cords. Hoteliers say they could alert guests to a left-behind item, but don't for reasons including privacy: A guest may not want his significant other to know about a stay. Also, the sheer volume of all lost and found on a daily basis would require too much time and effort—and these days a lot of reservations come through Expedia, Orbitz, etc., which provide neither address nor phone number.



Most people don't bother asking for their chargers back leaving them to pile up in lost-and-found stashes. Hotels are creative in what they do with them. If a guest asks where to buy a charger, Sandip Jariwala, GM of Hawthorn Suites Alameda, CA, says they bring out their box of left-behind chargers and let them pick one that works. The Sands in San Luis Obispo goes a step further: It keeps a basket of 12 phone chargers in the breakfast room with a sign that says, "Take one if you need one." In San Diego, the Tower23 Hotel was able to unload several hundred chargers in 2007 when Red Cross officials were looking for extras during California's massive wildfires that year. The 200 more that have turned up since are used as an informal giveaway program to guests.

Lost chargers can become art. Last year, the Fairmont Waterfront in Vancouver used its stash in Christmas decorating: It used charger cables to string recycled paper snowflakes and the bases to weight coat-hanger-and-paper-roll angels.

Carlton, Jim, "Good Thing Hotels Don't Charge For Left-Behind Chargers," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 7-8, 2010

NOTE FROM GHA: Please e-mail green@greenhotels.com and tell us what your property's doing with left-behind chargers. Do you think a reminder on a magnetic card on the back of the entrance door would be helpful? What are your suggestions for what it should say?

HELLO ClearWater Tech, LLC!

ALLY MEMBER ClearWater Tech, LLC is a leading designer and manufacturer of ozone generation equipment and related components for water and air purification applications, and is at the forefront of the ozone laundry market. Designed for commercial laundries, the EcoTex systems reduce environmental impact, save money, energy, water and detergents, while providing the highest wash quality and superior disinfection.



Ozone requires cold water for effective performance, and therefore saves up to 90% of the energy required by traditional (conventional) thermal laundering. Using EcoTex lowers the amount of chemicals required by about 21%. Labor costs are lowered by 39%. Fabric life is extended because fewer rinses are required.

Using ozone decreases the use of chemicals, therefore fewer chemicals are stored; thus providing more safety for staff. In seconds, the EcoTex system eradicates MRSA, Clostridium difficile and other laundry-associated bacteria and viruses. The EcoTex™ Advanced Laundry Oxidation Systems result in significant cost savings over conventional laundering; environmentally beneficial wastewater discharges, and provides degrees of microorganism kills and inactivation that cannot be attained by conventional laundering. Contact ClearWater Tech at **800/262-0203, 805/549-9724, sales@cwtozone.com** or visit **cwtozone.com** TODAY!

ELECTRIC-CAR PUSH

California's early lead in preparing for electric cars has made it the place experts are watching to see if buyers embrace a greener form of transportation. The state has created numerous incentives to encourage consumers to buy electric vehicles, including generous rebates. Now it is backing an ambitious and costly network of charging stations intended to ease one of the biggest concerns of potential buyers—will you run out of juice before you reach a place to recharge the batteries?

California is funneling \$200 million a year through 2015 into low-emission vehicles. As part of the plan, it is subsidizing more than 5,000 charging stations that should be in operation by 2012. California's goal is to have 7,500 all-electric and 25,000 plug-in hybrid cars on its roads by 2014, rising to 60,000 electrics and 85,000 plug-in hybrids by 2017.

New business models are being proposed to support "Level II" charging stations that offer 220- to 240-volt electricity, which charges cars in two to four hours, about half the time needed with standard 110-volt household current. Locations where people linger—restaurants, hotels, malls, churches and entertainment venues—are considered good for charging points because charging takes a while. It's unclear whether consumers will have to pay to juice up. Big-box retailers are starting to buy charging stations. Once they realize they can give away a dollar's worth of electricity and hold a person for an hour and a half, they get interested!

Nearly two dozen car companies have announced plans to sell electric vehicles in the next few years. One unanswered question is how many drivers will pay the premium that will be charged for electric cars. To help ease the cost, California is offering—on top of a \$7,500 federal tax credit—a \$3,000 to \$5,000 rebate to buyers of low-emission private vehicles and up to \$20,000 to buyers of low-emission commercial vehicles.

GHA suggests that perhaps you'll want to begin now considering whether or where you'll want an electric charging station at your property.

Smith, Rebecca, "California's Costly Electric-Car Push,"
The Wall Street Journal, June 17, 2010

GARDENING WITHOUT A SPRINKLER

In the ever-expanding quest to save money—and water—many are trading in clipped hedges and putting-green turf for landscaping that is much closer to what might have grown there in the first place. A Las Vegas homeowner got tired of watering almost every day, mowing every week and a seasonal schedule of fertilizer and weed-control applications. To top it off, it was dull—pretty nondescript—and the water bill was averaging \$100 a month.

Inspired by gardens seen in Italy's Tuscan countryside, she transformed her yard into an oasis of heat-tolerant and water-efficient plants. Today, she is surrounded by beds of flowering perennials herbs and fragrant vines. Her garden offers maximum privacy, and her water bill is cut in half to about \$50.

Garden design strategies that encourage minimal watering, called xeriscaping—based on the Greek word for 'dry'—first emerged where water resources are thin. Many xeric principles are simply common sense: Choose native plants rather than exotics, which can sometimes need lots of extra hosing. Group plants according to water need to avoid unnecessary drenching. And use mulches—such as pine shavings or gravel—to minimize water evaporation and keep weeds at bay. A critical element in xeric garden design is to have the soil slightly hilled to elevate flower beds and keep roots of dry-loving plants from sitting in water. River gravel can serve as a mulch, and will wick dampness away from the crown of plants. Plantings can be grouped according to water needs as well as in drifts of colors.

Municipalities and water utilities want people to go xeric, offering "cash-for-grass" incentives to home owners who replace lawns with low-water-use gardens. The City of Austin, TX, offered a "landscape conversion incentive" that pays homeowners \$20 to \$30 per 100 sq. ft. of garden that is converted using plants from an approved list. The Arizona town of Peoria expanded its "xeriscape conversion" program in 2009 offering homeowners and businesses as much as \$715—up from \$550 last year—to get rid of lawns.

Water customers in Cary, NC, may be eligible for \$500 if they replace at least 1,000 square feet of turf with either a more heat-tolerant variety of grass or a "natural area" that might include a patio or a garden filled with drought-tolerant plants. Utilities find paying people to alter landscaping is "cost effective" over the long run. The Southern Nevada Water Authority pays an average of \$1,300 per homeowner for a xeriscape conversion. That often proves less expensive for the utility than finding more resources, whether by purchasing water rights or building pipelines.

Water savings from xeriscaping can be immense. On aver-

age, landscape watering accounts for between 40% and 70% of residential water use. A 2005 report on the 5-year water use of more than 700 homeowners found those who converted to xeriscapes from grass turf reduced their annual household water use by 30% on average.

Chaker, Anne Marie, "Gardening Without a Sprinkler,"
The Wall Street Journal, August 18, 2010

Landfill Methane Burners Scorching Raptors

In landfills blanketed with soggy cardboard and rotting food, raptors perch atop tall methane burners, looking for rodents that scurry around the rolling hills of garbage. But with the easy meal comes risk—when landfills burn off the methane gas that builds up as the trash decomposes, the flames can scorch the birds, causing burned wings and tails, melted beaks, singed talons, and, occasionally, death. The Federation of NY Solid Waste Associations is among the first waste industry associations to join the Save Our Raptors (SOAR) campaign. The national initiative aims to raise awareness, encourage alternative flare designs and promote perch installation at landfills.



Bernadette Ritcher, an IL raptor rehabilitator who founded SOAR, first treated singed raptors in the mid-1990s. She's found that it can take up to a year of treatment before the birds can fly again. The coalition is making headway in NY and other states, and is working with the Solid Waste Association of North America to spread awareness to operators throughout the US. If outreach doesn't work, the group could turn to the courts. Raptors are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, so landfill operators could be liable for up to \$15,000 per injured bird or face jail time.

Bagley, Katherine, "Stopping landfill methane burners from scorching raptors," Audubon, May-June 2010, p. 24

Mushroom Boom

In college, Eben Bayer grew mushrooms in his closet—not for recreational purposes but for entrepreneurial ones. Today Ecovative uses mycelium or mushroom roots to make a biodegradable, chemical-free product that could replace Styrofoam. At Ecovative's 9,000 sq. ft. NY facility, mycelium is mixed with agricultural waste like rice husks, then put into a mold. A week or two later the product, called Ecocradle, is ready. It's inert and has the combined qualities of Styrofoam and wood. When people receive a stereo or TV packaged in it, they can put the material in the compost bin instead of the garbage.



Cosier, Susan, "Shroom Boom," Audubon, May-June 2010, p. 24

BEATS A TOASTER

Indonesian newlyweds starting a new life together have to give new life as well: Couples must donate trees to the government to legalize their nuptials. Home to some of the largest remaining tracts of tropical forest, Indonesia has the world's highest deforestation rate—losing 2% of its remaining forest annually—primarily because of agriculture, fires and illegal logging. To revegetate the landscape on the cheap, officials in the Garu district in West Java launched a program in 2009 requiring all couples to give 10 trees to the forestry department. Without the contribution, they aren't legally hitched. And no divorces

are finalized without the donation of one tree.

Cosier, Susan, "Beats Candlesticks," Audubon, May-June 2010, p. 22

WELCOME OHIO MATTRESS RECOVERY!

ALLY MEMBER Ohio Mattress Recovery and Recycling is a NATIONWIDE green business working with colleges, universities, hotels, motels, hospitals? and municipalities to help them keep mattresses out of landfills. During 2010 Ohio Mattress will help divert 1,000,000 pounds of mattresses from America's landfills, and is working toward diverting 3,000,000 pounds in 2011.



The mattresses are deconstructed and the steel from the mattresses is sent to a local scrap yard. The foam is recycled

to make carpet padding. The covers have multiple end uses, one of which is deisel fuel filters. The inner stuffing becomes bow and arrow target stuffing.

Ohio Mattress management believes in giving back, so we donate 10% of the proceeds of each project back to the customer. 10% of the proceeds of selling the recycled materials is given to a non-profit or charity of the customer's choice. Last year we also donated over 3,560 clean, usable mattresses to local, national, and international charities.

We started in Ohio, but we now work nationwide. Ohio Mattress offers a 10% discount to all GHA members. Before your next renovation, visit www.ohiomattressrecovery.com or call **440/856-3685!**

FLOATING GARBAGE CHOKES MAJOR CHINESE DAM

Floating garbage washed into the Yangtze River by torrential rains is threatening to clog part of the giant Three Gorges Dam, an official of the Chinese state media reported, the latest problem caused by devastating floods that have killed nearly 1,000 people and triggered several major industrial accidents.

The large volumes of waste could jam a key floodgate on the world's biggest dam. The official, Chen Lei, was quoted as saying that the unusually large amount of debris near the dam also could damage boats nearby and hurt water quality. Deadly floods are an annual affair in China, but this year's floods have caused the most damage and loss of life since 1998.



Some 968 people had been killed, and an additional 507 were missing, and economic losses totaled more than \$26 billion, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported, citing the State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters.

Recently floods in two chemical-plant warehouses in the same province, Jilin, washed 3,662 barrels filled with colorless and highly explosive chemicals, and an additional 3,476 empty barrels, into the tributary of a major river. Workers recovered 6,387 of the barrels, and officials said water tests showed the Songhua River, a major drinking source for millions of residents in the region, hadn't been contaminated. That incident followed a major chemical spill into a river in southern China by a copper plant hit by flooding.

Photos of the garbage near Three Gorges show cranes lifting grayish lumps of tree branches, plastic bags and bottles, and other household trash spreading across the reservoir above the dam. Garbage is a chronic problem for Three Gorges operators, but the levels have surged during the recent flooding. Trash pollutes many of China's waterways. Garbage output during the country's economic boom has grown faster than its ability to dispose of it. Landfills are small and are typically filled up within five years, compared with the average 30-year-life span of a landfill in Europe or the US.

While Chinese on average produce 130 kilograms (286 pounds) of garbage a year per person, compared with 750 kilograms in the US, the figure is closer to 400 kilograms in richer cities such as Beijing and Shanghai.

Oster, Shai, "Floating Garbage Chokes Major Chinese Dam," World News, The Wall Street Journal, August 3, 2010

AIRLIFTING TOADS

A precious cargo of 100 tiny, wild toads was airlifted from the Bronx and Toledo zoos to Tanzania in an attempt to reintroduce the species where it has become extinct in the wild. The Kihansi spray toad's compact habit was destroyed when a hydroelectric dam was built in 2000, eliminating nearly all of the waterfall mist that the amphibians need for survival. The toads soon began to dry out and fall ill. But scientists managed to collect a colony of almost 500 and shipped them to a handful of zoos entrusted with preserving the species. The toads haven't been seen in the wild since 2004, according to the Wildlife Conservation Society. The organization is in charge of reintroducing them to their original home, which encompasses only 5 acres in the Kihansi Gorge. Artificial sprinklers are now being installed in the gorge to simulate the spray toads' original living environment, allowing them to return home after a 10-year absence.



"Toad airlift," Earthweek, Universal Uclick, Houston Chronicle, August 29, 2010

FOOD SALVAGE – RECALLED EGGS

Millions of eggs from the Iowa farms at the heart of a massive salmonella recall are not destined for the garbage, but for a table near you. The recalled eggs that were already shipped to grocery stores and restaurants are being dumped by the truckload. The eggs still being laid by potentially infected chickens will be pasteurized to kill any bacteria. Then they can be sold as liquid eggs or put in other products such as mayonnaise or ice cream.

It's a common, if little-known practice, in the food industry—salvaging and selling products that may have been tainted with disease. After pasteurization, the bacteria are all going to be dead, and if they're dead, they're not going to hurt anybody," said University of Illinois food science professor Bruce Chassy.

Officials from the two farms that have recalled more than a half-billion eggs said there's no reason not to use the eggs while federal officials investigate the outbreak. Wright Egg farms and Hillandale Farms issued the recall after learning that salmonella may have sickened as many of 1,300 people.

Spokeswomen for the farms said their hens are still laying millions of eggs every day. Those eggs are being sent to facilities where their shells are broken and the contents pasteurized—a process that involves applying high heat without cooking the

eggs. Chassy said there's no reason the eggs—even from infected hens—cannot be safely sold if they are pasteurized or cooked. Doing so raises the temperature of the eggs high enough to eliminate most if not all salmonella.

Mercer, David, Associated Press, "Salmonella scare, recall shine light on food salvage," *Houston Chronicle*, August 26, 2010

"GRADE A" EGG STAMP NOT WHAT IT SEEMS

To some shoppers, the meaning of the "USDA Grade A" shield on egg cartons seems pretty obvious. "It means that the rabbi's blessed this as kosher, right?" said Stephen Potter, an early-morning shopper at a Safeway store in Alexandria, VA. "It means they've been checked. It's the quality seal. They're safe," suggested Susan Hergenrath, who was cruising the aisles at a supermarket.

Wrong and wrong. The mark on the carton just means that the U.S. Department of Agriculture had a "grader" at an egg-packing facility who checked the eggs' size and color and made sure the shells weren't cracked, a USDA official said. Consumers "misunderstand" the shield, he said.

Ever since the recent nationwide salmonella outbreak sickened more than 1,000 people and led to the recall of more than a half-billion eggs, USDA officials have stressed that ensuring egg safety isn't their job. That task, they say, belongs to the Food and Drug Administration, which said it is getting help from its criminal division and the Justice Department in looking at the farms at the center of the recall.

So what's the point of stamping egg cartons as Grade A? The USDA has two different missions. It does regulate some food safety, especially with meat, but it's also responsible for promoting American food here and abroad. The egg shield comes from the USDA's marketing side. Egg makers don't have to put a USDA grade on their cartons, and some choose not to. But the USDA shield can help them charge more for their products.



The egg side is different from the meat side at the USDA, where inspection programs are mandatory and the inspectors' job includes looking for sanitation problems. "The USDA mark

of inspection is only applied to meat products after inspectors in the plant have confirmed its safety and wholesomeness," said Brian Mabry, a department spokesman. "This is one of our most powerful tools in protecting the public health."

Wright County Egg of Galt, Iowa, the producer of 380 million of the recalled eggs, is among those paying the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service to employ a contract agency "grader"—not "inspector"—to check shell eggs for size and color.

The seal does offer consumers certain assurances. While graders don't look at every egg, they try to ensure that no white eggs slip into a carton of brown eggs, no regular-size eggs are classified as extra large, and none of the eggs are cracked. Grade A eggs are perhaps the most familiar to consumers. Grade B eggs can be slightly stained or misshapen, while Grade AA eggs have the smallest air cell inside the egg. But the USDA isn't looking for bacteria such as salmonella in the egg or the hen, department officials have said. Democratic Rep. Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut is one lawmaker who has long maintained that the government should have a single agency devoted to food safety. But that idea

has roused opposition from some in the industry who fear creating a new agency would add more bureaucracy. "The USDA stamp should have a clear and consistent message to consumers—not a stamp of quality assurance that may be misinterpreted as a stamp of safety," said Ms. DeLauro.

Until new egg-safety rules went into effect in July, the FDA could inspect farms, but had little enforcement authority. As a result, FDA officials say, they rarely inspected egg farms except "for cause." After the extra enforcement powers kicked in, and just before the salmonella scare made national news, FDA inspectors made it to Wright County Egg and found mice, wild birds, flies and overflowing manure at some of its facilities.

The agency said it now plans to inspect all 600 major egg makers nationwide to ensure that shoppers can be confident eggs on the shelves are safe. The FDA hasn't said whether it will ask for a shield of its own.

Mundy, Alicia and Tom Towson, "Eggs' Grade A' Stamp Isn't What It Seems," *The Wall Street Journal*, September 2, 2010

PORTICO JOINS!

ALLY MEMBER Portico is a lifestyle brand built on a basic mission: to produce aesthetically pleasing products while maintaining complete respect for the environment. While holding on to the brand's original reputation for attainable and sophisticated design, Portico is now rooted in our strong commitment to environmental awareness. Inspired by nature, crafted with integrity, Portico excites, inspires and always delivers more than expected in its bed and bath linens and personal care products.



The Portico lifestyle creates an environment that speaks comfort and expresses superior craftsmanship. We are committed to using natural and organic materials whenever possible. No harsh chemicals, no synthetic fertilizers or pesticides and no harmful dyes. Our complete respect for the environment can be seen through our use of environmentally sound textile mills and dye-houses as well as our numerous certifications for producing organic textile products.

Classic looks that were once heavy and opulent look new and fresh. Using the finest quality organic cotton, inks and dyes, Portico bedding and bath linens carry the highest sustainable standards making our products soft on the skin and gentler on the earth. Portico Spa amenities are featured exclusively in Hyatt Hotels across the Americas.

Bring nature's purity into your property with Portico . . .
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ROOM AT THE INN? NOT MUCH

Japanese no-frills hotel operator Toyoko Inn Co. is planning to expand into the US market with a 640-room tower in the NY borough of Queens, where it plans to offer tiny rooms for rates that are among the lowest in the city.

Toyoko, which operates 225 economy hotels in Japan, plans to charge just over \$100 a night for rooms that will average less than 200 sq. ft. By comparison, the average size room in NY is 325 ft. and the average rate in the first half of 2010 was \$200.92. The NY hotel, to be located just on the other side of the East River from Midtown, is scheduled to open in 2012.

After that, Toyoko will turn its focus to downtown sites it bought in recent years in Chicago and Atlanta. Toyoko ultimately envisions a 500-room hotel on Chicago's Clinton Street and a 700-room hotel on Atlanta's Forsyth Street.

Toyoko's hotels are unlike the economy hotels that most US travelers frequent. For starters, Toyoko favors urban locations near public-transit sites. Toyoko rooms consist of little more than a bed, bathroom, desk and TV. The few amenities offered at Toyoko's properties are tailored to business travelers rather than vacationers. Cable Internet connections are free for guests as are simple breakfasts of items like rice balls, miso soup and boiled eggs. Otherwise, Toyoko forgoes other extras common to US hotels, such as swimming pools and fitness centers. Key for Toyoko's project will be its location just steps away from a subway station, putting its guests only a few minutes from Midtown Manhattan.

Toyoko's reputation was dented in 2006, when it admitted that it had engaged in illegal building practices at some properties. It had originally provided special-purpose parking spaces for the disabled at those properties, but then removed them after the buildings had passed their official inspections.

Hudson, Kris, "No Room at the Inn? Well, Not Very Much,"
The Wall Street Journal, July 28, 2010

FIREWORKS AREN'T HEALTHY

Many fireworks contain a salt called perchlorate. In theory it should be fully consumed during the chemical reaction, but scientists at the EPA recently found that perchlorate from fireworks can make its way into the environment. From 2004 to 2006, EPA researchers collected samples from an Ada, OK, lake after fireworks shows. Each time, the water's perchlorate concentration spiked to up to 1,000 times above normal and didn't return to former levels until as many as 80 days later. David Parker, an environmental-chemistry professor at the



University of California, Riverside, says it raises concerns that perchlorate, which may impair cognitive and physical development in fetuses and infants, could contaminate drinking water.

Humans may not be the only ones affected. Last year a lawyer for activist Shirley Reynolds wrote to the city of Daytona Beach and the state of Florida, among others, alleging fireworks were harming shore birds and other wildlife. "You had sea turtles ingesting fireworks debris," Reynolds says. Daytona Beach City Attorney Marie Hartman says the city wasn't aware of any adverse consequences.

Makan, Jami, "Ten Things The Fireworks Industry Won't Tell You," SmartMoney, July, 2010, p. 78-9

AIRBORNE CONTAMINATION

Canadian researchers say they have found that birds feeding on marine life contaminated with toxic metals such as mercury and lead are depositing the poisons in their waste when they migrate to formerly pristine lakes in the Arctic. A team lead by Queen's University biologists compared sediment around where Arctic terns and ducks known as eiders nest. Analysis found higher concentrations of mercury and cadmium near the tern habitats as compared to elevated levels of lead, manganese and aluminum around where eiders nest. That matches

the contamination found in each of the bird species' primary food sources, the researchers say.

"Airborne contamination," Earthweek, Houston Chronicle, June 6, 2010

SOLAR PROJECTS NOT HAPPENING

Not a light bulb's worth of solar electricity has been produced on the millions of acres of public desert set aside for it. Not one project to build glimmering solar farms has even broken ground. Instead, five years after federal land managers opened up stretches of the Southwest to developers, vast tracts still sit idle.

Records and interviews show that the Bureau of Land Management operated a first-come, first-served leasing system that quickly over-whelmed its small staff and enabled companies, regardless of solar industry experience, to squat on land without any real plans to develop it.

At a time when the nation drills ever deeper for oil off its shores even as it tries to diversify its energy supply, the federal government so far has failed to use the land it already has—some of the world's best for solar—to produce renewable electricity. Nowhere is this more evident than in Nevada, where a Goldman Sachs & Co. subsidiary with no solar background has claims with the BLM on nearly half the land for which applications have been filed, but no firm plan for any of the sites.

Dearen, Jason, Associated Press, "Solar projects not seeing the light of day," Houston Chronicle, September 2, 2010

Monarch's New ECO line of Hotel Linens

Monarch Bath, Bed & Spa is introducing Monarch ECO eco-friendly bathrobes, towels and sheets that allow you to provide a more luxurious experience for your guests, while saving energy, reducing water use and lowering your laundry operational costs.

Monarch ECO robes are constructed from a Chamois microfiber fabric that is as warm and soft as flannel, yet five times more absorbent and dries in one-third the time, compared to cotton. The chamois is a true microfiber that is extremely durable and will last up to 10 times longer than cotton or other synthetic fibers.

Monarch ECO towels are made from super-fine, Extra-Long Staple (ELS) cotton, known for contributing to the sustainable consumption of cotton. These towels are 160% bulkier and significantly more absorbent than traditional combed cotton towels of the same weight. They cost significantly less to launder, saving up to 30% in water consumption, using less detergent and taking 10-20% less drying time. The process also incorporates Control Union-certified, sustainable, eco-friendly dyes and chemicals to reduce impact on the environment.

Monarch also recently added Comphy sheets to their ECO line. Constructed of performance microfiber that looks and feels like 600-thread-count cotton, these sheets are remarkably soft and breathable. For more information, call **413/528-5150** or visit monarchrobe.com TODAY!



GREEN HALLOWEEN IDEAS

This Halloween instead of candy treats, think of treasures. Kids love little trinkets, tops, stickers and collectable cards. Most children especially love gifts from nature like polished rocks, crystals and seashells. Think keepsakes, tokens and stocking-stuffer type gifts, but don't forget to think healthy and green. Although non-food items are generally healthier than food items, try to avoid non-recycled plastic toys. Following are some ideas for greener choices:



FOOD ITEM TREATS: Individually wrapped organic tea for kids, organic juice boxes, organic apple sauce snack packs, organic fruit leather, snack bars, Bare Fruit trial size packs, boxes of organic raisins and other organic dried fruits, trial size packs of dried veggie chips, Glee Gum "minis" or other individually wrapped small gums, organic granola/breakfast bars, trial/snack sized bags of organic cookies, crackers, or popcorn or individually wrapped pumpkin seed treats.

NON-FOOD ITEMS & TREASURES: Acorns (kids love items from nature); adhesive "bandages" with pirate, black cat and other fun themes (one per child); barrettes or other hair things; beads, bean bags, bells, charms, coins (US or non-US), mini cookie cutters; Cootie Catcher Note Cards (one card per child); Crayon "rocks" (soy-based); elf and fairy items; fake jewels (lead free); fortunes; Games for Your Brain Ocean Cards (one card per child); glass rings; jokes; money; mosaic glass tumbled, recycled (safe for older children); paper balls; pencils made from recycled money or plastic; polished rocks/skipping stones; printed items like word games, word search or cross word puzzles; pumpkins (mini, dried); rainbow peep holes; recycled glass tiles; seashells; seed packets; soap; soy or beeswax crayons; spinning tops (recycled plastic); stamps from foreign countries; stickers; Sweet Dreams, 36 Bedtime Wishes (one card per child); temporary tattoos (recycle-themed); toothpaste; unfinished wood items; whimsical treasures; whistles (recycled plastic); World Almanac for Kids Puzzler Deck (one card per child); worry dolls; Xeko cards; yarn bracelets; 52 Cool Tricks for Kids cards (one card per child); 52 Great Art Projects for kids (one card per child); 52 Brain Tickling Activities for Kids (one card per child); 52 Tricks and Treats for Halloween (one card per child); 3-D cat cards (one per child) or 3-D dog cards (one card per child).



If you are expecting to hand out treats and treasures to several hundred or more kids and are looking for affordable items that are also healthy and green, **RecycledProducts.com** has tons of earth-friendly items that are perfect for a Green

Halloween. Most can be custom printed with your logo or a Halloween message of your choice. They also sell many items that are pre-printed and ready to be handed out.

Here are our favorites: Pencils: from recycled plastic, recycled denim or recycled money; tattoos: custom or recycle-themed; coloring books: Earth-friendly themes; guide wheels: fun, educational tools; shoe laces: custom printed and recycled; soy crayons in 3 or 4 pack: customized box; stickers: recycling theme; whistles: recycled plastic, custom printed; spinning tops: recycled plastic, custom printed; buttons: recycled material with soy ink, custom; magnets: recycled, custom; seed paper/bookmarks for planting or reading; bookmarks with recycling themes; door hangers: recycled, custom door; hand fans; organic cotton tote bags: printable (for treat/treasure bags); soy candles: custom and organic; and cotton t-shirts:

custom.

Need ideas for what message to print on your school, company or organization's treats and treasures? Here are a few suggestions: Happy Hallogreen!®, Think outside the candy box®, Go Green on Halloween, Putting the GREEN in Halloween, Turning Halloween Green, Healthy + Fun = Happy Everyone, It's Halloween, just greener, Trick-or-treating green style, Green Halloween logo, I ♥ Earth.

greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=treats

GREEN COSTUME IDEAS FOR HALLOWEEN SUCH AS Al Gore, Compact fluorescent light bulb, Mother Nature/Mother Earth/Gaia, Tree hugger and Green roof can be found online at http://greenliving.suite101.com/article.cfm/green_costume_ideas_for_halloween.

COMMUNICATING GREEN ISSUES WITH STAFF

by Stefan Mühle, General Manager, Orchard Hotel, San Francisco, CA, theorchardhotel.com

In 2002, as it became increasingly important to control expenses ever so tightly in the post-9/11 business climate, we wanted to change our cleaning products in the Orchard Hotel's Housekeeping Department. We were taking first steps to go green. And, yes, these green cleaning products, if used properly, would actually save us valuable dollars! So, we called a meeting with all housekeeping staff members and told them the "good news." To our surprise, the message was greeted with distrust as most of the crew did not believe that green cleaning products would do the job. My argument for a "healthier work environment" was met with very little enthusiasm as the predominantly Chinese housekeeping team was much more focused on getting rooms cleaned quickly and efficiently—no matter the environmental price. Potential health benefits? Not much interest either.

At that point, it would have been easy to simply issue a memo and force the team to comply. Realizing, however, that employees look at senior management for inspiration and not just direction, we decided to ask everyone to participate in an experiment assigning room attendants into two groups—one outfitted with traditional chemicals, and one equipped with green products—for one week initially. During that first week, much training was given to the green team as employees learned how to properly dilute, mix and match and apply specific surface cleaners. Since the products were non-toxic, fear of mishandling evaporated quickly, but product performance remained a hotly debated point of contention. After another week, the green group slowly began to see the benefits of using the product properly. Two more weeks went by (all the while asking for daily feedback), and then we rotated groups. Those employees having used the new product now had to revert to using chemicals, and the other team now couldn't wait to experience the green items which, in the interim, had generated lots of buzz among those who had been using them for the past month.

The results were astonishing. Not only did our employees overwhelmingly select the green cleaning products, but the experiment created a tremendous boost of confidence among staff members in a very challenging business environment. They had become part of the decision-making process!

So, it's easy being green—especially when you work as a team!

VIRTUAL ROMANCE = PAYMENT FOR NONEXISTENT GUESTS Real Men Go to Hotels With Virtual Girlfriends

Only in Japan, at resort city Atami, that used to be popular with honeymooners, do young men go on dates with virtual sweethearts on handheld electronics. Since the marriage rate among Japan's shrinking population is falling and with many of the country's remaining lovebirds heading for Hawaii or Australia, Atami decided to do something about it. It is trying to attract single men—and their handheld devices.



A one-hour train ride from Tokyo, Atami has definitely seen better days. The number of overnight visitors has dropped by half from the

peak in the late 1960s. The main shopping area has many boarded-up storefronts and other remnants of the city's heyday as an entertainment mecca. The city is going all out to indulge ardent Love Plus+ fans.

In the first month of the city's promotional campaign launched July 10, more than 1,500 male fans of the Japanese dating-simulation game Love Plus+ have flocked to Atami for a romantic date with their video game character girlfriends. The men are real. The girls are cartoon characters on a screen. The trips are actual, can be expensive and aim to recreate the virtual weekend outing featured in the game. Atami's mayor says, "Atami has always been a romantic place, but it is now a romantic place for a modern generation."

Love Plus+ recreates the experience of an adolescent romance. The goal isn't just to get the girl, but to maintain a relationship with her. After choosing one of three female characters—goodie-goodie Manaka, sassy Rinko or big-sister type Nene—to be a steady girlfriend, the player taps a stylus on the DS touch-screen in order to walk hand-in-hand to school, exchange flirtatious text messages and even meet in the school courtyard for a little afternoon kiss. Using the device's built-in microphone, the player can carry on sweet, albeit mundane, conversations.

If the real-life Romeo earns enough "boyfriend power" points—by completing game tasks like homework or exercise to become smarter and more buff—the reward is a virtual trip to Atami.

At the real Hotel Ohnoya, which opened its doors in 1937, the staff is trained to check in Love Plus+ customers as couples

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even if there is only one actual guest. The managing director says, "We try not to ask too many questions because we want them to be able to remain immersed in the game world." Some devoted fans will go so far as to pay twice the rate—most hotels in Japan charge per guest not per room—to indulge the fantasy that they are not there alone. A night's stay, at most, can cost \$500 though many rooms are cheaper.

Local businesses are feeling the love. A shop selling processed fish cakes on Atami's main shopping street, started offering special Love Plus+ fish cakes at the end of July. At \$5.30 each, the store has been selling out of its daily allotment of 150 cakes—50 for each girl.

Korean barbecue-inspired restaurant Hien says a quarter of its customers are currently game-related. For 5,000 yen, customers get a special Love Plus+ menu of Japanese beef and side dishes. "We've been stunned," Hien's owner says, "at how happy this makes those customers."

Wakabayashi, Daisuke, "Only in Japan, Real Men Go To a Hotel With Virtual Girlfriends," The Wall Street Journal, September 1, 2010

CAPITALIZE ON MEETING COFFEE BREAKS

To be a win-win, it starts with a quality coffee product. Having a great product that guests rave about is the foundation of a great coffee service. Then knowing the best way to brew, set up and serve the product is what keeps things running smoothly.

Placement of the coffee stations should be up to the guest or client, with the default being to set up one kiosk outside the meeting room. If outside the room, staff can refresh without disrupting the meeting. Also, outside the room, guests can leave and refresh on their own and not disrupt the meeting.

Research has found that most groups prefer continuous breaks and to not interrupt the meeting. Meeting packages can include communal coffee areas that can be shared by several meetings at once and are constantly refreshed throughout the day, which helps with not increasing waste.

Crowell, Chris, Associate Editor, "Ways to capitalize on coffee breaks during meetings," H&MM, July, 2010, p. 20

FINAL WORDS . . .

"I would feel more optimistic about a bright future for man if he spent less time proving that he can outwit Nature and more time tasting her sweetness and respecting her seniority."

E. B. White