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- 1) [Hiring Time Rolls Around at Carlisle](#)
- 2) [Incentives In the Works for Briggs Murray KY Plant](#)
- 3) [Generac Posts Profit in Fourth Quarter](#)
- 4) [Teske Leads Briggs Out of a Deep Downturn](#)
- 5) [Toro Distribution Center Breaks Ground in Tomah, MN](#)
- 6) [Lawnmower Makers Settle Horsepower Suit](#)
- 7) [Lawn Mower Strikes Active Bomb](#) – And you thought you'd seen it all.
- 8) [Thoughts for the Day](#)
- 9) [Stihl Sees Positive First-Quarter Sales Increase](#)
- 10) [John Deere Builds Five Millionth Lawn and Garden Tractor](#)
- 11) [Briggs Reports Results for the 3rd Quarter of Fiscal 2010](#)
- 12) [Buffalo County, NE Pursues Unpaid Powermate Taxes](#)
- 13) [Work Starts on \\$11.5M Toro Distribution Center](#)
- 14) [OPE Industry Meeting and Events Calendar](#)
- 15) [Obama Trade Goals Facing Business Realities](#) - Excerpts
- 16) [OPEESA Officers, Board, Executive Director Contact Information](#)

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1) HIRING TIME ROLLS AROUND AT CARLISLE

Ned Hunter www.jacksontimes.com

JACKSON, TN -- March 7 -- Carlisle Tire and Wheel will begin producing tires for the nation's agricultural industry inside the former Whirlpool-Jackson Dishwashing Products plant by June, said Russell Williams, plant manager.

The company is looking for maintenance technicians, assembly operators and other hourly workers. It also is looking for engineers in all fields, business analysts, cost accountants and several management positions, including quality control, materials flow control, and value stream managers.

Those who hope to work for the company should not go to the plant on F.E. Wright Drive. Instead, people seeking professional or management positions should send their resume to jaxrecruiting@carlisletire.com. Information on how to apply for hourly positions, such as assemblers, will be provided by the Tennessee Career Center at Jackson at a future date. An advertisement on when and where to apply will appear in The Jackson Sun at that time, Williams said.

Applicants for the hourly positions must take a test that is part of the National Career Readiness Certificate Program, said Daphne Johnson, human resources manager for the company. The test takes about three hours to complete. Details of when and where the test will be given will be announced later. It includes some English and mathematics skills, Johnson said.

"The test gives you an idea if you would be successful in a factory," she said.

The company expects to hire the first round of employees in April and will continue to hire workers in blocks until nearly all positions are filled within the next seven months. Company officials said the pay would be above the market wage but declined to specify.

"We will be 95 percent full by Sept. 1," Williams said.

Johnson said her company has received more than 600 resume and applications. "Hourly positions will be posted in The Jackson Sun as they become available," she said.

"Hiring is being spaced out because training takes several months to complete," Williams said. "And that is tough to do in bulk."

Plant employees will work one of three non-rotating shifts, five days a week.

Shift 1: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Shift 2: 4 p.m. to midnight

Shift 3: Midnight to 8 a.m.

A multi-color floor plan of the plant hangs on the east wall of Williams' office. The layout is called "Road Map to 2014." It details the arrival of equipment, where it will be placed and what products it will manufacture. Names of cities, such as Opelika, Ala., are written under squares and rectangles designating the origination point of the equipment. Multi-colored dates written under those city names give the expected arrival dates.

By 2014, the company will occupy all but about 10,000 square feet of the 600,000-square-foot building.

"This is the most aggressive plan I have ever seen," said Williams, who also worked at Mark IV Automotive in Lexington.

Charlotte, N.C.-based Carlisle Companies is consolidating its operations in Jackson from three plants in Pennsylvania, Alabama and China. The company purchased the former Whirlpool plant for \$7 million last fall, according to the Madison County Register of Deeds. Williams said he did not know how much the company will spend on equipment and other capital investments at the plant.

Some of that expense comes from readying the facility for manufacturing equipment that is larger and heavier than Whirlpool's.

Jackson Energy Authority is helping Carlisle install a larger electrical transformer to help pull and regulate a larger electrical load than was needed by Whirlpool. The energy authority also is installing a 6-inch natural gas line. The line will supply boilers that create steam used to cure the company's tires.

H&M Construction workers and architects are installing heavy-duty concrete pads to support Carlisle's equipment. The company also is digging about five trenches to submerge a portion of the incoming curing equipment.

Employees will work at ground level rather than on platforms, which is safer, Williams said.

Company President Fred Sutter said previously that Carlisle chose the Whirlpool building because its U-shaped layout allows for expansion. Sutter said his company could put a roof over the section that is now the U's open end, where the plant's 31 loading docks are located. That area could house more equipment and allow for increased production. That expansion plan, however, is only a thought at this time.

Safety lights are now about the only illumination inside the plant, which is big enough to hold several 747 airliners. Footsteps of Carlisle's employees echo across the plant's concrete floor, which is void of equipment and products for now.

But at the plant's east end, in an area smaller than a football field, workers now are assembling soil compacting wheels used in farm seeding equipment. The wheels fold and compress topsoil over seeds after they are planted. The wheels are being assembled from parts shipped to the plant. Eventually, the product will be made entirely in Jackson.

"That is the part of the business we are moving back from China," Williams said.

The arrival of Carlisle comes as Madison County struggles with 11 percent unemployment as of December, according to the latest data available from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Web site.

So far, Carlisle has hired 16 people, seven hourly and nine salaried, to manage incoming equipment, hire staff and assemble the compacting wheels.

One of those assemblers is 28-year-old Calvin Davis of Yuma. He lost his job at Lexington's Summit-Brantley Building Innovations a week before Christmas.

"It feels good getting a steady job this quickly," said Davis, a husband and father of two.

Davis recognizes that he is on the ground floor of a company that is establishing itself as a permanent part of Jackson.

"I'd like to be in management," he said, "I have a management background."

Williams and other Carlisle officials are anxiously awaiting a visit from John Deere's purchasing team on Tuesday and Wednesday. If Deere employees approve and certify Carlisle's soil compacting wheels, they will be shipped to the farm equipment manufacturer beginning March 15.

"Then from that point until September," Williams said, "we will bring more people and equipment into the plant."

Carlisle will begin manufacturing its second set of products in June. Those products include air-filled agriculture and construction tires and high-speed trailer tires for products such as boat trailers,

recreational vehicles and implement trailers. The tires will range from 10 inches to 24 inches in diameter depending on the market, Williams said. The tires will be bias ply. The company will not manufacture radial tires for those products.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

2) INCENTIVES IN THE WORKS FOR THE BRIGGS & STRATTON MURRAY KY PLANT

Kyser Lough www.murrayledger.com

State incentives are in the works for two local manufacturers looking to expand and further develop their products. Both Briggs and Stratton and Vanderbilt Chemical were named by the Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority for state incentives.

Rodney Bohannon, plant manager of the Murray Kentucky Briggs and Stratton plant, said while nothing is concrete, the company is looking into future options that would involve state incentive funds.

“What we are trying to do is to sustain our manufacturing processes in Murray for the future and one way to do that is to look at some project opportunities,” he said.

While he said he could not get specific yet, Bohannon said it involved retooling operations at the plant to sustain employment levels and the company's markets for the future. He said he hoped to have more details about it in the summer months.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

3) GENERAC POSTS PROFIT IN FOURTH QUARTER

Rick Barrett www.jsonline.com

March 29 - Generac Holdings Inc., a Town of Genesee, WI maker of back-up power generators, said Monday it turned a profit in the fourth quarter of 2009.

The company, which went public in February with the sale of 18.75 million shares in an initial offering, reported net income of \$11.9 million, turning around a loss of \$515.8 million a year earlier. Expenses in the year-ago quarter included a goodwill impairment charge of \$503.2 million.

Sales decreased 10.8%, to \$154 million from \$173 million.

Results were hurt by weak industrial and commercial market conditions and a weaker summer storm season compared with 2008, the company said.

For the full year, Generac reported net income of \$43.1 million, compared with a loss of \$556 million in 2008.

Sales increased 2.4%, to \$588 million from \$574 million.

Residential sales of \$370.7 million increased 11.5% from a year ago, driven by Generac's introduction of new home standby and portable generator products, the company said. Strength in the residential market offset a 9.9% decline in industrial and commercial sales to \$187.3 million. Generac attributed the slump to lower capital spending and the decline in non-residential construction.

"We are pleased with our top and bottom-line growth in 2009 given the difficult economic environment," said Aaron Jagdfeld, Generac's CEO.

Jagdfeld said Generac is well positioned to profit in 2010, although the economy is still worrisome.

"If the recovery takes longer, it will present a more challenging environment for us," he said on a conference call with analysts.

Generators range in size from small, portable units that can run one or two appliances to the largest, which can power a hospital if wired into the electrical system.

Generac, Briggs & Stratton Corp. and Kohler Co., all based in Wisconsin, are three of the largest generator manufacturers.

Thousands of Wisconsin-built generators of all sizes are typically in staging areas waiting for bad weather and power failures that will follow.

The U.S. market for standby generators, which are units tied into the electric system of a home or a business, has barely been tapped, with only about 1% or 2% of homes having standby power units.

This summer, Generac plans to begin selling a standby generator with a suggested retail price of \$1,699 - not including installation costs which could exceed \$1,000.

More than 70% of home standby generators are purchased by consumers over 50 years of age, according to Generac's warranty registration data.

Generac received \$224 million in proceeds from its initial public offering. Earlier this month, Generac received an additional \$23.8 million as the underwriters of its initial stock offering exercised their option to buy an additional 1.95 million shares.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

4) TESKE LEADS BRIGGS OUT OF A DEEP DOWNTURN

Rick Barrett www.jsonline.com

Since Jan. 1, Todd J. Teske has been president and chief executive officer of Briggs & Stratton Corp. Teske, 45, previously held several other key positions at the company, including president and chief operating officer. Before coming to Briggs in 1996, Teske worked at the Arthur Andersen accounting agency, where he managed several merger investigations and worked with clients from small businesses to international conglomerates.

Teske has a bachelor's degree in accounting from University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and a master's in business from Northwestern University. He serves on the board of Badger Meter Inc., Junior Achievement of Wisconsin and the Boy Scouts of America-Milwaukee chapter, and is vice chair of Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce.

In an interview, Teske talked about the outdoor power products industry, the economy and Milwaukee. Here are excerpts from that interview:

Q. As we head into the spring lawn-and-garden season, what are your thoughts about the health of the outdoor power products industry?

A. Since 2004-2005, the market has been down more than 30%, so it's been a pretty substantial decline. Initially, it was more weather related and not necessarily the economy. When the grass doesn't grow, we don't sell as many lawnmower engines. And when there aren't hurricanes, we don't sell as many generators.

Then in 2008, we started to see the early impacts of housing. We were more exposed to the housing market than perhaps we thought we were in the past. So basically the market continued to go down. We had never seen a down market for two consecutive years, and all of a sudden we were a number of years into it.

We are not calling for the market to be up substantially this year, maybe 2% to 4%. But what we are seeing is a pent-up demand, we think, for lawn-and-garden equipment.

Q. Are consumers seeking less expensive equipment, downsizing their purchases?

A. It's more about wants vs. needs. If somebody really needs something, they will buy it. But if they don't need it, they will think twice about buying it or not. And if someone would have bought a \$400 walk-behind lawnmower with lots of features, now they may spend \$225 for a good, solid mower that doesn't have as many features.

Q. What are your thoughts about the overall economy?

A. I think we may have hit bottom, but I would not say we have necessarily turned a corner yet. This wasn't a two-year recession and now we are back to good times. This one was pretty deep, and as long as unemployment continues at around 10%, it's going to be tough.

I think our industry will recover quicker than the overall economy. We have a ways to go yet, but when the economy does snap back, we will be extremely profitable.

Q. What's happened with the company's workforce?

A. It's unfortunate that we had to do some of the things that were necessary in the last few years, (closing plants) in Port Washington, Jefferson and Rolla, Mo.

But we are doing a fair amount to invest in our workforce, so that when the economy does come back, we have well-trained people who are ready to hit the ground running. The last thing you want to do is to get rid of people. You can have the best brands, the best equipment and the best plants. But if you don't have the right people to do what needs to be done, you are not going to be successful.

Q. Since you have been CEO, what are some of the bigger challenges you have faced?

A. The thing I have been trying to stress is communication and transparency. Whenever you hit difficult times, you have to make sure that people understand what's going on and keep them engaged. It starts with me, trying to be as open and honest as I can without violating SEC rules.

And I always tell our employees, if they are going to rely on me to make all of the decisions for this company, we will fail. But if we take the collective wisdom of the group and have open and honest communication, we will get to the truth and the answers that will give us the best opportunity for success.

Q. What's it been like being CEO?

A. Once you get this job, it's a little different from having other executive roles at the company. Now you become the company's external face to the world. There are more demands on your time, and investors want to hear from you. And there's a lot at stake when you talk to investors, and potential investors, that our story comes across in a clear fashion.

I have been involved in the Milwaukee community, and I am even more involved now. It's a lot of fun, but it puts a lot of demands on my time. There are certain things that become casualties along the way, things you otherwise would have done but can't now.

Q. How do you deal with the job-related stress?

A. Faith, family and fitness. From the faith and spiritual standpoint, that's really important to me. You also have to find a balance in your family life, and it's really hard. My family is incredibly supportive of what I have to do. And it helps to carve out some time for vacations or even having lunch with my wife sometimes when I don't have a meeting on my calendar.

As for fitness, I get up every morning at about 5:30 a.m. and work out every day. That's important because chief executives, on average, have more health problems because of the stresses of the job.

Q. What is your biggest concern about Milwaukee's future?

A. We have to fix the education system or we will face long-term problems and all sorts of issues. The unemployment rate is more than 15% for people who drop out of high school, and if we don't get our kids educated, they won't develop skills and curious minds.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

5) TORO DISTRIBUTION CENTER BREAKS GROUND IN TOMAH, MN

Burl Gilyard www.finance-commerce.com

There's still not much new development work going on in the Twin Cities. In some cases, developers are finding work by casting a wider net.

Minneapolis-based Ryan Companies US, Inc., is breaking ground this Friday on a large new distribution center for the Bloomington-based Toro Co. in Tomah, Wis. The small Wisconsin city is approximately 170 miles southeast of Ryan's downtown Minneapolis headquarters.

The \$11.65 million project calls for a 350,000-square-foot distribution facility on a 38.5-acre site. Ryan will own the property and lease it to Toro. Toro already operates a 320,000-square-foot manufacturing plant in Tomah. The project is slated for completion in September.

The new project will replace an existing 310,000-square-foot warehouse/distribution center it leases in Baraboo, Wis., about 60 miles away from Tomah.

The formal groundbreaking ceremony on Friday morning will include representatives of Toro, Ryan and Tomah city officials.

"With the total package that we put together for them...it made a lot of sense for them. It was the right time to do this project," said Casey Hankinson, director of development for Ryan Companies.

Hankinson said that a key component of the deal was being able to acquire the land cheaply from the city.

"The city owned the land where the site was. We were able to buy the land from them at a very economical rate. Land pricing is a huge component of all real estate deals. The city recognized the importance of Toro," Hankinson said.

Toro, founded in 1914, is best known for its lawnmowers. Today the company makes an array of turf and landscape maintenance equipment and precision irrigation systems. Equipment manufactured at the Tomah plant is used for maintaining golf courses, athletic fields, public green spaces and commercial properties.

"Various sites in neighboring communities were evaluated for convenient proximity to the Tomah manufacturing facility, site access, land size, location to highway infrastructure, and price," wrote Branden Happel, a spokesman for Toro, in an email.

"After a thorough, independent analysis of several groups we selected Ryan for several reasons. Being a general contractor, they handle all aspects of the build; everything from start to finish. We have a strong history with the company as they have done several projects for us in the past. And, they had the financial stability which was important in today's economy," Happel added.

In December, Toro reported revenue of \$1.52 billion and net earnings of \$62.8 million for its fiscal 2009, which ended in October.

Hankinson said that Ryan has a long-standing relationship with Toro, but landed the project through a competitive process after the company issued a call for proposals.

Hankinson said that the developers need to have their eyes open today to find fresh business.

"The projects are fewer and far between, you've got to have your antenna up for all different sorts of opportunities," Hankinson said. "Development is hard right now unless you have a really good, quality tenant."

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

6) LAWNMOWER MAKERS SETTLE HORSEPOWER SUIT

Jon Hood www.consumeraffairs.com

April 7 -- Spring has finally arrived, and with it the obligation to get the yard back in shape. But this year consumers finally have a reason to be thankful for their lawnmower: a class action lawsuit settlement that entitles scores of people to a check and/or a warranty extension.

The settlement concerns a lawsuit, filed last May, contending that advertisements for over 20 lawnmower brands exaggerated the machines' horsepower. The complaint, filed in federal court in Wisconsin,

claimed the defendant companies "defrauded the public" by "significantly overstating" the horsepower of the subject lawnmowers, and by "failing to disclose...[their] true, significantly lower horsepower."

Specifically, the complaint stated that the defendants sold "identical, but differently and misleadingly labeled, engines at different prices -- with higher prices for engines labeled with purported higher horsepower." In other words, the companies took two identical engines, slapped different labels on them, and sold them at significantly different prices.

The suit also claimed that several of the companies created a so-called "Power Labeling Task Force," a group that they used to plan and organize their conspiracy. The group held meetings "at various locations," and even kept minutes that were distributed once the task force had adjourned.

By discovering the task force, the plaintiffs were able to include a count for violation of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO). According to the complaint, the defendants' "repeated acts of mail and wire fraud" -- namely, mailing false and misleading advertisements -- rose "above mere fraud."

The suit concerns lawnmowers with the brand names Yard-Man, Cub Cadet, Honda, Bolens, Exmark, Deere, Sabre, Scotts, Toro, Yard Machines, Craftsman, Troy Bilt, Husqvarna, Poulan, Poulan PRO, Lawn-Boy, Weed Eater, White Outdoor, Snapper, Simplicity, Brute, and Murray. The suit also covers "numerous other brands" with engines manufactured by Briggs & Stratton, Tecumseh, Kawasaki, Honda or Kohler.

Under the settlement, class members who submit timely claim forms can receive \$35 for every eligible walk-behind lawnmower they own, and \$75 for every eligible ride-on mower. Consumers who own a Briggs & Stratton, Toro, Tecumseh, TecumsehPower, Kawasaki, or Kohler mower, which was under a manufacturer's warranty when purchased, can receive a one-year warranty extension.

Additionally, MTD, Kawasaki, Kohler, Sears, Deere, Tecumseh, Briggs & Stratton, Toro, Electrolux, and Husqvarna have agreed to begin using a "new uniform standard" to measure horsepower.

A final approval hearing is scheduled for June 22. Class members who wish to object or opt out of the class must do so by June 4. Claim forms for the above-detailed cash benefits are due by August 31. Consumers have one year following final approval to submit claim forms for a warranty extension. Additional information is available at the official settlement website.

In addition to the RICO claim, the complaint alleged unjust enrichment, antitrust violations, conspiracy, and violations of state consumer protection laws.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

7) LAWN MOWER HITS ACTIVE BOMB!

A Recent ABC News Headline On The Web:

HOOPER, Utah – April 25 -- (ABC News) - Taylor Wood narrowly escaped injury or even death when his lawn mower hit a bomb. "If the blade had hit it harder certainly could have caused of lot of damage," said Taylor's father Brent Wood.

The Weber County Sheriff's Department is asking others to use caution before mowing in the Hooper area.

A spokesman for the Davis County Bomb Squad says the bomb was made during World War II and it's just as powerful now as it was when it was built nearly 60 years ago.

The bomb is 3 1/2 inches long and 1 1/4 inches around. The mower's blade hit the tip of the bomb. It would have likely exploded if the blade hit in the middle.

"So I picked it up took a look at it and I seen that it was TNT...at first I thought it would be some firework type thing cause I didn't think I'd find an explosive out here," Taylor said.

He took it from the field to his father. "First I told Taylor to throw it in the fire and get rid of it. Mom started freaking out. She didn't want to do that," said Brent.

Weber Fire, Weber County Sheriff's Deputies and later the Davis County Bomb Squad were called to the field at about noon in Hooper. They determined the bomb contained a quarter pound of TNT.

"That would have caused some serious damage to the lawn mower as well a the operator of the lawn mower," said Weber County Sheriff's Department Spokesman Chris Bitton. He is trying to find where the bomb came from, why it was in the field and how it got there.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

8) THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY

IMMORTALITY

"I don't want to achieve immortality through my work...
I want to achieve it through not dying."

-- Woody Allen

CREATIVITY

"The secret to creativity is knowing how to hide your sources."

-- Albert Einstein

HISTORY

Do not seek
to follow in the footsteps
of the men of old;
seek what they sought.

- Matsuo Basho

PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance is not a long race;
it is many short races
one after another.

- Walter Elliott

LIFE

It is in the everyday
and the commonplace
that we learn patience,
acceptance, and contentment.

- Richard J. Foster

GOALS

What you get by
achieving your goals
is not as important as
what you become by
achieving your goals.

- Zig Ziglar

JOURNEYS

Only those who will risk going too far
can possibly find out how far one can go.

- T.S. Eliot

CHANGE

Not everything that is faced
can be changed,
but nothing can be changed
until it is faced.

- James Baldwin

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

9) STIHL SEES POSITIVE FIRST-QUARTER SALES INCREASE

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va., April 7, 2010 -- STIHL Inc. announced that first-quarter sales exceeded those of the previous year despite the softened handheld outdoor power equipment market. "We are sensing that in a challenging economy, consumers want to buy reliable, long-lasting products to make their dollars go further," said STIHL Inc.'s President Fred Whyte. "We are experiencing renewed optimism from our customers for continued economic recovery, and these results are certainly encouraging."

STIHL Inc., which employs over 2,000 people in its manufacturing facility and branch offices in the U.S., reported that sales of its handheld equipment were up over 5 percent for the first quarter 2009. The company credited its distribution channels and the release of several new products as contributing to the performance. "When money is tight, consumers buy from someone with whom they have a relationship and they trust," said Whyte. "The only place you can purchase our line of equipment is at a dealer who not only sells but services our product, assuring the buyer of quality and performance throughout the life of the product."

An increasing eco-consciousness among consumers is also seen as contributing to the increase in sales. "We are launching twelve new products this year under our 'Caring for Nature' line in our commitment to socially responsible environmental stewardship," said Whyte. "As a leader in the industry, we believe it is our duty to deliver the performance our customers demand, while reducing emissions and noise."

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

10) JOHN DEERE BUILDS FIVE MILLIONTH LAWN & GARDEN TRACTOR

HORICON, Wis., April 19 -- John Deere recently rolled the five millionth lawn tractor off its assembly line at the Horicon, Wis., manufacturing facility. A model from the Select Series™ X700 Ultimate™ Tractor line-up was manufactured as the five millionth lawn tractor in time for spring and the peak outdoor power equipment selling season.

"Reaching 5 million lawn tractors is a significant milestone for us. Over the last 47 years, the John Deere Horicon Works has built a reputation for manufacturing durable and reliable products for millions of homeowners," said Dan Hoffman, factory manager, John Deere Horicon Works. "Our co-workers have dedicated themselves and worked hard to consistently provide products that meet and exceed customer expectations, and we're extremely proud of our accomplishments."

In 1963, production of the first lawn and garden tractor began at the Horicon facility during which year John Deere built 1,000 units of the 110 Lawn Tractor. An original 110 Lawn Tractor now resides at Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

In May 1984, John Deere Horicon Works reached the 1 million mark, when a Model 318 lawn and garden tractor rolled off the assembly line. The 2 million mark was surpassed in 1992 with the production of the LX188.

In 1998 the factory reached the 3 million mark with the production of an LT133 lawn tractor and in March 2003 John Deere Horicon Works exceeded 4 million tractors built.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

11) BRIGGS REPORTS RESULTS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER OF FISCAL 2010

MILWAUKEE, April 22, 2010 -- Briggs & Stratton today announced third quarter fiscal 2010 consolidated net income of \$24.1 million or \$0.48 per diluted share, that when adjusted for a litigation settlement of \$30.6 million (\$18.7 million after-tax) would result in an adjusted consolidated net income of \$42.7 million or \$0.85 per diluted share on consolidated net sales of \$694.6 million. The litigation settlement relates to a class action lawsuit regarding horsepower labeling that was previously disclosed in a Current Report on Form 8-K filed on March 2, 2010.

The third quarter of fiscal 2009 had consolidated net income of \$25.4 million or \$0.51 per diluted share on consolidated net sales of \$673.8 million. Consolidated net sales increased \$20.8 million or 3% from the third quarter of the prior year. The increase is primarily attributable to higher sales volumes in the Engines Segment. Third quarter adjusted consolidated net income increased \$17.3 million from net income in the same period a year ago. Engines Segment operating results were the primary driver of the improved adjusted net income.

For the first nine months of fiscal 2010, consolidated net income was \$18.4 million or \$0.36 per diluted share, that when adjusted for the litigation settlement of \$30.6 million (\$18.7 million after-tax), would result in an adjusted consolidated net income of \$37.1 million or \$0.73 per diluted share on consolidated net sales of \$1.412 billion.

For the same period a year ago, consolidated net sales were \$1.609 billion, and consolidated net income was \$26.6 million or \$0.53 per diluted share. The majority of the \$197.0 million or 12% decrease in consolidated net sales was the result of lower sales volume in the Power Products Segment. The remainder of the net sales decrease reflects lower engine volume and lower prices. The nine-month adjusted consolidated net income increased by \$10.5 million from net income in the same period a year ago. Engines Segment operating results were the primary driver of the improved adjusted net income.

Engines:

Third quarter net sales for fiscal 2010 were \$498.9 million versus \$480.2 million for the same period a year ago, an increase of \$18.7 million or 4%. The increase in net sales was primarily the result of an engine unit shipment increase of 6% from the same period a year ago. Offsetting the volume improvement were lower average prices in effect for fiscal 2010. Shipments of engines increased in the third quarter for lawn and garden applications due to the shift of OEM production to the last half of the fiscal year from the fiscal second quarter reflecting the desire of the channel participants to control their working capital commitments at the end of the calendar year.

Net sales for the first nine months of fiscal 2010 were \$983.6 million versus \$1.078 billion in the prior year, a decrease of \$94.5 million or 9%. Unit volume decreases of 7% through nine months were the result of lower engine demand for portable generators, soft engine shipments to European lawn and garden equipment manufacturers and minor market share losses in various engine categories. The majority of the remainder of the net sales decrease was due to lower pricing implemented for fiscal 2010.

Income from operations for the third quarter of fiscal 2010 was \$43.8 million. Income from operations, after adjusting for the \$30.6 million litigation settlement, was \$74.4 million, a \$27.8 million improvement from the \$46.6 million reported for the same period in the prior year.

The \$27.8 million improvement was primarily the result of lower manufacturing costs for materials, labor and fixed overhead. Improvement in the adjusted income from operations from sales and manufacturing volume increases was offset by the previously discussed lower prices.

Income from operations for the first nine months of fiscal 2010 was \$56.0 million. Income from operations after adjusting for the litigation settlement was \$86.6 million, a \$23.5 million improvement from the \$63.1 million reported for the same period a year ago. The \$23.5 million improvement for the first nine months was the result of similar lower manufacturing costs as mentioned for the third fiscal quarter, offset by lower sales volume, production volume and pricing.

Power Products:

Fiscal 2010 third quarter net sales were \$245.3 million versus \$250.2 million for the same period a year ago, a decrease of \$4.9 million. The net sales decrease was primarily the result of lower portable generator sales in the quarter, as the current year's quarter did not have hurricane replenishment shipments that were experienced in last year's third quarter. The portable generator sales decrease was partially offset by stronger pressure washer volume and a small improvement in shipments of lawn and garden equipment.

Net sales for the first nine months of fiscal 2010 were \$565.5 million versus \$697.7 million in the prior year, a \$132.2 million decrease. Lower portable generator sales for this nine-month period accounted for almost all of the net sales decrease primarily due to the absence of any hurricane activity in fiscal 2010. There was a loss from operations of \$7.1 million in the third quarter of fiscal 2010, a \$4.2 million greater loss than experienced in the prior year. The increase in the loss from operations resulted from lower plant utilization, primarily production of portable generators that decreased over 90% in the current third quarter compared to the same period a year ago.

The loss from operations for the first nine months of fiscal 2010 was \$8.0 million, a small improvement from the \$8.9 million operating loss generated for the same period a year ago. The improvement in the loss from operations for the quarter was the result of lower manufacturing costs, primarily related to lower commodity costs and planned cost saving initiatives. The improvements were offset by lower sales and production volumes primarily related to the significantly lower portable generator shipments and production in fiscal 2010.

General:

Other income for the third quarter and first nine months of fiscal 2010 was greater than the same periods last year primarily because of improved earnings in our joint ventures. Interest expense for the third quarter of fiscal 2010 was less than the prior year because of lower borrowings offset by a premium expense of \$1.4 million to repurchase a portion of outstanding senior notes during the quarter. Interest expense for the first nine months of fiscal 2010 was also lower due to lower borrowings offset by a premium expense of \$2.4 million to repurchase a portion of outstanding senior notes during fiscal 2010.

The effective tax rate was 27.1% for the third quarter and 22.3% for the first nine months of fiscal 2010 versus 31.4% and 23.4% for the same periods last year, respectively. The variation reflected between years was due to the required recognition of the tax effect of certain events as discrete items in the quarter in which they occurred rather than in the overall expected annual tax rate.

The 8.875% Senior Notes that are due in March 2011 have been classified as a Current Maturity on Long-term Debt in the consolidated balance sheet as of the end of fiscal March 2010. The company believes it will be able to replace these borrowings with new financing.

Outlook:

The company, after recognizing the litigation settlement in the third quarter, now projects that fiscal 2010 net income will be in the range of \$24 to \$31 million or \$0.48 to \$0.62 per diluted share. This current forecast range is the same as the forecast provided in January 2010, except it now incorporates the litigation settlement and the bottom end of the forecast has been increased.

Consolidated net sales are projected to be approximately 6% lower between years primarily due to the absence of hurricane related sales of portable generators and their related engines, the continued impact of year over year pricing changes and lower engine shipments to Europe for lawn and garden applications.

While the lawn and garden season has started, there remains uncertainty that the market growth built in to our projections should be changed at this time. Production levels for substantially all products are planned to be lower in fiscal 2010 to decrease our investment in working capital.

Operating income margins are projected to be in the range of 2.8% to 3.1% after recognition of the litigation expense but still in the previously disclosed 4% to 5% range if the litigation expense is removed. Interest expense and other income are forecasted for the full year at \$26 million and \$5 million, respectively. The effective tax rate for the full year is projected to be in a range of 27% to 30%.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

12) BUFFALO COUNTY NE PURSUES UNPAID POWERMATE TAXES

Betsy Friedrich www.kearneyhub.com

KEARNEY — April 22 -- Buffalo County has hired a Delaware attorney to pursue unpaid property taxes the former Coleman Powermate plant owes.

The Buffalo County Board of Supervisors ratified a decision to hire Mark Hurford of the Campbell & Levin law firm in Wilmington, Del., at a regular meeting last week.

Deputy County Attorney Andy Hoffmeister said when Coleman Powermate, a former Kearney manufacturing plant, closed in 2008, it owed \$24,411 on its 2007 taxes.

“While that was pending, 2008 ticks by and the county had to involuntarily prepare a personal property tax return for them, which we’re empowered to do. The county calculated taxes for 2008 at \$18,956,” Hoffmeister said.

That means in total, the company owes Buffalo County \$43,367.

Hoffmeister said the company owes taxes only on personal property because the real estate is owned by the Buffalo County Economic Development Corp.

Powermate Corp. filed for bankruptcy and closed its Kearney plant in March 2008 after 22 years of doing business in the city. The manufacturer of portable generators, air compressors and pressure washers employed 200 people.

The company operated as Coleman Powermate for many years and employed as many as 700 in its heyday.

The plant re-opened under new ownership when Italian company Pramac America purchased the assets of Powermate in May 2008 and began production later that year.

“The plant’s up and running now, and Pramac is paying obligations as they’re coming due. In the meantime, we’re trying to sort out what appears to be in excess of \$40,000 and get some money and priority out of the liquidated assets of the bankruptcy, so we find ourselves having to obtain Delaware counsel,” Hoffmeister said.

He said Buffalo County’s interests in the company’s assets will be considered in a Delaware bankruptcy court May 17.

"We're just one of many that are trying to get some of our tax money," he said. "We're hoping at least we didn't drop off the radar screen."

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

13) WORK STARTS ON \$11.5M TORO DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Sam Black www.twincities.bizjournals.com

Ryan Cos. U.S. Inc. broke ground earlier this month on an \$11.5 million distribution center for The Toro Co. in Tomah, Wis.

The 354,000-square-foot building, which will be used to distribute Toro's lawn-maintenance equipment, will replace a 310,000-square-foot distribution center Toro has operated in Baraboo, Wis., for almost two decades. Toro's lease there expires at the end of 2010.

The Tomah building is much closer to the company's 490-employee, 35-year-old manufacturing plant in Tomah.

"The selected site in Tomah provides the greatest benefit in helping reduce operational costs while improving our productivity," said Judy Altmaier, vice president of operations at Toro, in a press release.

The new distribution center, which will have 15-20 employees, will shorten the distance from factory to warehouse from 60 miles to one. The employees at Baraboo have been offered positions at the new facility, according to Toro.

Minneapolis-based Ryan will own the building, which sits on a 39-acre parcel about a mile southeast of Toro's plant.

Ryan bought land from the city of Tomah and a private economic development group called Forward Tomah for a total of \$192,000, said Casey Hankinson, director of development for Ryan who led the project for the developer.

The project faced a tight time frame and many obstacles, including access to highways and the mitigation of wetlands, he said.

Tad Jellison, from Jones Lang Lasalle, assisted Toro in its site search and the selection of Ryan. The Tomah project is one of three manufacturing and logistics changes that Toro has announced recently.

In December, Toro said it's closing its Simi Valley, Calif., plant bought in 2007 and transferring that work to its plants in Riverside, Calif., and Juarez, Mexico.

Toro also said last year that it was consolidating its Lincoln, Neb., distribution facility into its Beatrice, Neb., manufacturing plant.

The last time that Toro built a facility in the United States was in 1984 when it opened its Lakeville, Minnesota distribution center.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

14) 2010 – 2011 OPE INDUSTRY MEETING AND EVENT CALENDAR

2010 - 2011 OPE INDUSTRY MEETING AND EVENTS CALENDAR	
January 18-20, 2011	BTME-BIGGA , British Turf Management and the British International Golf & Greenkeepers Association Show, Harrogate International Center, England
January 18 – 21, 2011	World of Concrete , Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
February 28 – March 3, 2011	The Rental Show , American Rental Association Conference and Trade Show, Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
February 9 – 10, 2011	GIS , Golf Industry Show, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL
February 12 – 15, 2011	OPEAA , Outdoor Power Equipment Aftermarket Association Annual Meeting, Renaissance Vinoy Resort and Golf Club, St. Petersburg, FL
February 27 – March 2, 2011	OPEESA , Outdoor Power Equipment and Engine Service Association, 10 th Annual Members Meeting, Four Seasons Resort, Palm Beach, FL
March 13, 2011	Daylight Savings Time Begins
April 14 – 16, 2011	EETC , Equipment and Engine Training Council 15 th Annual Conference, Milwaukee, WI
May 4-6, 2010	National Hardware Show , Las Vegas Convention Center and Sands Convention Center
June 20-25, 2010	Skills USA , National Leadership and Skills Conference, Kansas City, Missouri
June 24 – 26. 2010	OPEI , Outdoor Power Equipment Institute Annual Meeting, The Coeur d’Alene Resort, Coeur d’Alene, ID
August 29-31, 2010	GAFA (with SPOGA) , International Garden Trade Fair with the International Trade Fair for Sport, Camping and Garden Lifestyle, Cologne, Germany
September 7 – 9, 2010	IOG SALTEX , Grounds Care, Sports Facilities, Amenities, Landscaping And Estate Management Outdoor Trade Show, Windsor Race Track, Windsor, Berkshire, England
September 20 – 22, 2010	GLEE , International Garden and Leisure Show, NEC Birmingham, England
October 20-23, 2010	FFA , Future Farmers of America Annual Convention, Indianapolis, IN
October 28-30, 2010	GIE+EXPO , Green Industry and Equipment Expo, Louisville, KY (combining EXPO and the GIE Show)
November 7, 2010	Daylight Savings Time Ends

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

15) OBAMA TRADE GOALS FACING BUSINESS REALITY

www.online.wsj.com

President Barack Obama's goal of doubling U.S. exports over the next five years will be difficult to meet, business leaders and economists say, because of the lack of momentum on demolishing trade barriers and the shift by more American companies toward producing overseas.

U.S. exporters want Washington to put more pressure on trading partners to eliminate tariffs, crack down on intellectual-property violations and take a harder line on trading partners' currency policies. American firms say stronger action by the federal government could substantially boost prospects for U.S. exports.

Todd Teske, chief executive of Briggs & Stratton Corp., a Wauwatosa, Wis.-based small-engine maker, says he is partly counting on more exports to rebuild his sales after the recent downturn. Briggs & Stratton already receives about a fifth of its \$2 billion in revenue from sales abroad, particularly in Europe. Mr. Teske calls the U.S. goal of doubling exports a "lofty goal" and one worth pursuing. But he's realistic. "It seems like every country or region wants to fuel their recovery plan with exports," he said.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)

16) OPEESA Officers, Board, and Executive Director Contact Information

Name	Company	Address	City State	Email	Position/Term
Mark Vining	Roberts Supply	4203 Metric Drive	Winter Park FL 32792-6897	m.vining@robertssupply.com	President
Robert Graham	Engine Warehouse	7415 Empire Central PO Box 40490	Houston TX 77040 Houston TX	Robert.graham@engwarehouse.com	Vice President / <i>Annual Meeting</i>
Pete Yunker	Power Equipment Systems	1645 Salem Industrial Dr. PO Box 669	Salem OR 97301 Salem OR	petey@pesnet.com	Sec/Treas.
Rob Zucker	Outdoor Equipment Distributors	2721 Discovery Drive PO Box 58494	Raleigh NC 27616 Raleigh NC	rzucker@oedinc.com	Immediate Past President
Todd Winstead	Tidewater Power Equipment	5796 Thurston Ave.	Virginia Beach VA 23455	twinstead@tpeco.com	2011
Virginia O'Neill	O'Neill Associates	795 Canning Parkway	Victor NY 14564	virginia@oneilloutdoor.com	2011
Denis Bedard	Husqvarna Professional Products	7349 Statesville Road	Charlotte NC 28269	Denis.bedard@husqvarna.com	2011 <i>Manufacturer/ Affiliate Rep.</i>
Robert Smith	Smith's South-Central Sales Co.	1802 S. Arkansas St. PO Box 578	Springhill LA 71075	rsmith@smithssc.com	2011
Tim Congdon	Congdon Associates Dist. Co. – CADCO	1365 Strykers Road PO Box 350	Phillipsburg NJ 08865	timc@cadcodist.com	2012
Mike Lupo	TD Retail Card Services	1000 MacArthur Boulevard	Mahwah, NJ 07430	Mike.lupo@tdrcs.com	2012 <i>Manufacturer/ Affiliate Rep.</i>
Ron Monroe	Hayward Distributing Co.	4061 Perimeter Drive	Columbus OH 43228	rmonroe@haydist.com	2013
Mike Rounsavall	Dixie Sales Co.	5920 Summit Ave.	Browns Summit NC 27214	mrounsavall@dixiesales.com	2013
Nancy Cueroni	OPEESA	37 Pratt Street	Essex, CT	Info@opeesa.com	

About OPEESA

OPEESA is the Outdoor Power Equipment and Engine Service Association. Our membership includes more than 140 distributors and manufacturers of outdoor power equipment and air-cooled gas and diesel engines. Our mission is to "assist distributors in achieving outstanding channel performance."

To fulfill our mission, we offer a wide range of services and programs as well as opportunities to share ideas with fellow distributors. In addition, we foster cooperation and proven leadership among manufacturers, distributors and dealers in the outdoor power equipment industry.

[BACK TO THE TOP](#)