

good fit

ALUM FINDS CAREER IN LAWN CARE

*From an Ohio farm to Scotts Lawn and Garden
Bonnie Hohlbein '82 is really going global*

by Michele Tinker, Director of Annual Giving

Bonnie Hohlbein '82 looks very much at home in the Marysville, Ohio, corporate headquarters of the Scotts Company, with its natural wood and deep windows looking out on lush grounds. She calls it a good fit for someone who grew up on an Ohio farm.

Bonnie is a native of Delphos, Ohio, who came to Defiance College after receiving her associate's degree in accounting from Lima Technical College. Arriving on campus as a junior and a commuter student, it wasn't easy for Bonnie to make the connection with the college, but she was always grateful for the scholarship that enabled her to attend. She also enjoyed the liberal arts aspect of her DC education.

"I had taken all my accounting courses, so I got to take some really fun courses," she explained, especially music appreciation and art, which she feels truly enriched her life. She related how after taking art, she could see shadows where she never realized them before. "It actually taught me to see differently."

A couple years after graduating from DC with a B.A. in accounting, Hohlbein attended Ohio State full-time to get her MBA, which she called a great experience.

She went into banking briefly after grad school, but found it too uptight, and then was in public accounting for five and a half years before joining Scotts.

Scotts is the world's leading supplier and marketer of consumer products for do-it-yourself lawn and garden care, with products for professional horticulture as well. Bonnie has been with the company for 13 years now. Over that time, she has seen it grow from \$600 million in sales to a hefty \$3 billion, a significant share of the \$7 billion market worldwide. Among the international family of brands owned by Scotts are Miracle Gro,



Bonnie Hohlbein '82 is seen here standing in front of an antique seed cleaner in the lobby of Scotts corporate headquarters in Marysville, Ohio.

Ortho, RoundUp, Turf Builder and Smith & Hawken.

This year, Bonnie was named vice president of global technology and operations finance, a position where she handles supply chain, research and development, and IT worldwide.

This involves a great deal of travel and experiences that don't come with every job, Bonnie acknowledges. "I spend a lot of time in Europe - UK, France, Germany, Netherlands and Belgium. London is my favorite, and Belgium is beautiful."

In France, Scotts is headquartered in Lyon, the gastronomical capital of the world.

"I never knew quite what I was eating," Bonnie laughed, telling about her visits there. "I got to the point that I don't even ask, I just say, 'Feed me.'"

On a more serious note, Bonnie talked about what it is like representing Scotts in the U.S. to other countries. "It's eye-opening. As Americans, we take a lot for granted, I've learned a lot from our international people. It makes you realize why people in other countries have issues with the American people. When you see how they use electricity, heat their homes, conserve water, you realize how much we waste," she explained.

In addition to enjoying her job, Bonnie likes the overall atmosphere at Scotts. She calls Scotts CEO Jim Hagedorn a progressive thinker who has instituted a proactive approach to health care. There is a total fitness and health care center for employees and their families across the street from the corporate headquarters and Scotts has taken a strong no-smoking stance (if you smoke, you can't work for Scotts). It was Hagedorn's father who founded Miracle Gro.

Bonnie explained that since the company grew by acquisition, it's something of a mish-mash, but she thinks there is still a small company feel to it. "We still have family day, holiday parties, a farmer's market in the parking lot every Friday – but it's also a fast-paced environment. It makes it exciting."

When she's home in Columbus, Bonnie is most likely to spend her free time at a sports event. She calls herself a huge fan and has season tickets to OSU football and men's

and women's basketball, and The Columbus Blue Jackets. When asked what she likes to do on vacation, Bonnie replied, "I used to travel a lot but now the last thing I want to do is get on a plane and stay in a hotel room!" Despite that, she enjoys skiing in Tahoe and Colorado.

Spending time with her family is also a high priority for Bonnie. Her parents still live in Delphos and she has four brothers, three in Ohio and one in Kentucky. She also has 11 nieces and nephews who like to ski with their aunt and hang out at her pool. "I get to borrow whatever size and shape I want and then return them," she says with a grin. ♦



The Scotts Company corporate office in Marysville.

Newcomer appointed to DC's Board of Trustees

President Wood has announced the appointment of Glen Newcomer, Bryan, Ohio, to the Defiance College Board of Trustees. A fifth-generation farmer, he is the president of N&L Farms, Inc., a family-owned farming operation dedicated to the production of seed and commercial grain. He is also the owner of Agtec, LLC, an agricultural business providing crop insurance services, agricultural seed sales, and agronomic service to area farmers and businesses.

Newcomer received an associate of agricultural science degree from Ohio State University in 1981. He received accreditation from the American Society of Agronomy in 1996.



He is active in numerous civic endeavors including Bryan Rotary Club where he currently serves as first vice president. He is currently vice president of the Bryan City Board of Education and served three terms on the Four County Career Center Board of Education. He is a member of the Bryan Area Foundation. He is also a member of Trinity Lutheran Church where he has served on the congregational council and is a past Sunday School superintendent. He is a charter member of the church's Lutheran Men in Missions group. Newcomer is past president and delegate for the Williams County Farm Bureau, a past advisory

board member for Sky Bank, and a current member of the National Federation of Independent Business, Ohio Farm Bureau, Bryan Athletic Boosters, Bryan Music Boosters, and Bryan Academic Booster club.

He and his wife, Ann, have three children, Laura, a graduate student at the University of Illinois Law School; Matthew, a student at The Ohio State University; and Jason, a student at Bryan High School. The Newcomers reside on the farm originally homesteaded by Glen's family in 1867. ♦



This year's Freshman Service Day sent Defiance College freshmen out across northwest Ohio to perform a variety of service projects and get acquainted with community residents. Groups of students visited the Thoreau Sanctuary where they did maintenance work and took part in educational sessions. Several students traveled to Bittersweet Farms, a residential facility for individuals with autism. Another contingent of students spent the morning performing yardwork and miscellaneous tasks for local senior citizens and later joined them for lunch at the Defiance County Senior Center. A fourth project involved students planning a Hunger Banquet to benefit the local homeless shelter. ♦