

Thanks to Shelly Israelson and Bob Sanderson for responding to my entreaty in the last Florida Green for answers to explain why so many

superintendents don't participate in the various turf research rebate programs we've established. The fact that they were the only ones who responded makes me conclude that apathy is, indeed, the primary reason.

Reasons Bob and Shelly offered included: distributors shipping a

generic brand even though a name brand was ordered; tight budgets closely monitored by accounting departments; and just being too overwhelmed by job and family concerns to get involved.

Bob also expressed a concern about how much of the money we donate actually makes it to the research program or scholarship we designate. For Bob and everyone else who doesn't know: the reason we like to put everything through the FTGA is because the FTGA has a special arrangement with IFAS. One hundred percent of every dollar we donate goes directly into the project we designate. Most other contributions are charged about 25% for overhead, so we are fortunate to be given this "favored" status.

I am extremely happy to report that the Valent Corporation will still be making the \$20,000 donation (\$10,000 each to the FTGA and FGCSA) for turf

research we had projected. There were concerns the effect on Orthene sales from the introduction of Chipco Choice and the generic Orthene. I hope all superintendents who have contact with Peter Blum will thank him for his efforts in initiating this program.

On November 18 and 19, FGCSA President Dale Kuehner, FTGA President Roy Bates, Tim Hiers, David Barnes, Ron Garl and I went to Tallahassee for a golf industry summit meeting. The meeting was organized by the PGA Tour under the auspices of the Florida Sports Foundation.

The purpose was to bring together the various golf industry organizations to express views and concerns, and see if there was enough interest and support to warrant the formation of an umbrella organization. The consensus was, yes an umbrella organization was needed to collect and disseminate pertinent information and to help pull the golf industry together for mutual benefit.

Without a doubt, thanks in large part to Tim Hiers' outstanding presentations each day, our contingent seemed the best organized and most professional of any of the organizations in attendance.

A follow-up meeting was held on Dec. 4 in Orlando, and Roy Bates reports that he volunteered the FTGA as the interim caretaker of this as-yet unformed association.

We all are hopeful that this is the beginning of an organization that will finally unite the golf industry's various factions into the economic and political force it can and should be.

Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

Mark My Words



Mark Jarrell, CGCS Assistant Editor

I have to admit my skepticism. After all, I did put a lot of time and effort into the failed Florida Golf Council a few years ago.

There seem to be so few outside of our side of the business who can see the big picture or have a vision of the future. A perfect example is the Hobe Sound golfer who wrote complaining to Golfweek after their issue completely devoted to "Golf and the Environment"

Mr. Ken Chilvers wrote: "I find it impossible to believe that Golfweek thinks its customers (avid golfers) would be

pleased to have it devote virtually an entire issue to 'Golf and the Environment.' What could be adequately said in three paragraphs you've managed to cram into thirty pages or so... come on! We buy your magazine to read about golf. Not to have some liberal nut try to make us feel guilty about playing a great game."

If Mr. Chilvers represents the "average golfer," (and I think he does, which is why I quit writing for *Golfweek* after eight years), then how are we ever going to harness all this potential golf industry clout when our typical customer doesn't

have a clue about the influence and power of the environmental movement and its correlation to escalating golf course development, construction, and maintenance costs?

Too many golfers categorize golf as just a game like tennis or bowling are just games, and fail to acknowledge golf's unique connection to the environment or their responsibilities as players. The mentality seems to be, "Golf costs a lot to play. I pay the freight, and I don't want to be bothered with the details. If it begins costing too much, fire the superintendent and get somebody in that can do it cheaper!"

Thank God only a small fraction on the working side of the golf industry has this attitude, or golf would already be dead. If golfers don't begin getting a clue, golf will be dead in the not-too-distant future.

Enough negativity!

On the positive side, I'd like to report that we are making progress with IFAS and the turf program at the University of Florida. This column was due before I could get an update on the Turf Coordinator position, but last I heard we had narrowed the field of applicants from seventeen down to five.

In addition, the program review team has been selected and the review will take place in mid-February.

But the most encouraging news I have to share (remember you heard it here first) is that the two people named to the new half-time positions in turf breeding at the university are absolutely first rate, enthusiastic and dedicated! Drs. Brian Scully and Russell Nagata have been "playing" with turfgrasses for the past year or so in their spare time from working with corn, beans and celery.

David Barnes and I got a private tour of their turf collection and facilities in Belle Glade on Dec. 4 during the station's 75th anniversary celebration. These guys are extremely sharp, and I predict great things from them in the near future if our industry properly supports them!

We owe IFAS Vice President Dr. Jim Davidson a big thank-you for those appointments.

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