**By Don Benham**

What is the old saying? I’ve got good news and I’ve got bad news, which do you want first? Let’s start with bad news.

Several newspapers in the state have started their annual attack on golf courses and chemical use again. The articles generally quote somebody who makes scientific-sounding comments that are based on opinions.

In Manatee County the school board has decided to buy some land from the University of Florida to build a new high school. The land they are buying is part of the university’s agricultural station on State Road 70. The newspaper has written several articles saying how deadly the land is. Here are a few quotes from articles submitted to the paper. “To use pesticide applications on neighbors’ yards or nearby golf courses are chemical attacks - surely not as severe as terrorists but chemical attacks nonetheless. Every day is code red to us.”

The last time I heard this particular lady speak was at a department of health meeting in Orlando where she had also said, “Golf courses are chemical attacks. Golf courses are chemical attacks on our neighbors’ yards or nearby golf courses.” I couldn’t tell you about his business but, on losing some chemicals and cautions us on how to use MSMA. He said methyl bromide will probably be available past 2005, which was good news. He classified nematodes today as our number-one pest problem.

National Golf Foundation’s Barry Frank gave an overview of where golf was heading in number of rounds played and courses under construction. McCladney and Pullen CPA firm talked on how accounting decisions affect course superintendents also. For example to buy or lease equipment they passed out a complete booklet on trends of private golf clubs including average cost per hole for maintenance broken down by region. It includes a good checklist for superintendents.

This program was put together by Kevin Downing and I would highly recommend it to all superintendents. The good news is how good the program was and the idea of putting it on at 4:00 PM in the afternoon. The bad news is it was under-attended.

(Editors note: The Palm Beach Post also recently ran articles on the Audubon/ASCP Workshops and the results of the Florida Golf Economic Impact Study.)

For information about the author, see inside cover:

**Harrell’s Founder Loses Lengthy Battle with Cancer at 74**

Harrell’s, Inc. Chairman of the Board Jack R. Harrell, Sr., 74 died March 28 in Lakeland following a lengthy battle with cancer.

Harrell spent more than 50 years serving the turf and ornamental industry. His work began when his parents purchased a feed store in 1941 in downtown Lakeland. That location served local farms and ranch customers in greater Lakeland for many years. Harrell was thrust into leadership of the business following his father’s sudden death in 1964. The company soon expanded by adding five retail locations across west central Florida. The focus of the business during the 60s and 70s was lawn and garden supplies.

Harrell then directed the company into the industry news.