As we travel around the Southeast Region, every course has been impacted negatively by many of the following: muddy fairways, poor overseeding results, fairway and putting green disease issues, cart damage to fairways and roughs, and thin turf, and tees with lower density turf.

Fairway overseeding ended up being a complete waste of money in many instances and when successful, it was no panacea for these issues. Golfers should be patient and understand that course conditions aren’t going to improve much until it dries up and the temperatures warm so the turf can recover.

MARK MY WORDS

Beyond Golf

By Mark Jarrell

My apologies in advance to my peers who expect this space to be devoted strictly to golf-course related issues, but I believe most will appreciate some provocative and controversial reflections on our country’s future security since 9/11.

The terrorist attacks on our country have shaken us all and changed us forever. Maybe because I dodged a bullet with personal tragedy - my son had been working at the World Trade Center four months prior, and my closest cousin working at the Pentagon was not on site - I’ve spent more time than most trying to understand the mentality of people who could commit such acts, and those around the world who cheered. That bastard Mohammad Atta had lived among us - he had eaten dinner at The Olive Garden two miles from my house, for God’s sake! - and was still filled with such hate for us that he could fly a plane into one of the World Trade Center Towers! Contrast this with my own and most Americans concern and misgivings about the possible death of Iraqis as we go to war with that country.

Reading an article in American Heritage magazine introduced me to an author who not only has the background to offer valid answers and insights about our dangerous world. He is a brilliant, though controversial, strategic thinker who offers sound advice on U.S. military, foreign, and domestic policy. His name is Ralph Peters, and he retired as a lieutenant colonel from the army in 1998. He has served at the Pentagon, the Executive Office of the President, and visited 50 countries from the Middle East to the former Soviet Union to Southeast Asia. He now writes, lectures, and consults. I purchased and highly recommend two of his books - Fighting for the Future - Will America Triumph?, and Beyond Terror - Strategy in a Changing World.

The books are mostly collections of essays, some of which in the first book were published before 9/11 (eerily prophetic and provocative!). I’m guessing (and hoping) that President Bush and his top advisors are very familiar with Col. Peters’ work. Any American who wishes to better understand those who would not hesitate to kill us if they had the means, and revolutionary strategies for dealing with the threat they pose, should read these two books. I found I couldn’t put them down, and consider them essential reading for all Americans to make better decisions at the polls, at home, and at the workplace.

You’ll also feel better about being an American, as Col. Peters is adept at analyzing the strengths and marvels of our society, while acknowledging our weaknesses and offering strategies for succeeding against those who would exploit them to destroy us. Things like the American work ethic, the freedom of information dissemination, women in the workplace, the tolerance and socialization of our various religions - things we accept without realizing - are very familiar with Col. Peters’ work. Any American who wishes to better understand those who would not hesitate...
A is for arsenic. An apple is a fruit. Arsenic is a natural element classified as a ‘heavy metal’ in the Periodic Table of Elements found in every chemistry classroom and textbook in the world.

At present, we are like a police department that ventures out of the station house every four or five years to combat crime for a day. Then, after a bath of rhetoric about what has failed us, Faithless Europe meanders, while faithful Islam crumbles. We have gained an almost miraculous middle ground. A society that transcends its religious differences without losing its faith is invincible.

A is for apple, aspirin and arsenic. An apple is a fruit. Arsenic is a natural element classified as a ‘heavy metal’ in the Periodic Table of Elements found in every chemistry classroom and textbook in the world.

The recent studies coming out of South Florida reporting high levels of arsenic in golf course water and soil samples reflect the total arsenic and do not differentiate or explain where the arsenic comes from. Since arsenic is on the label of MSMA, then a direct link is inferred. But one study also inferred that 492 metric tons of arsenic was applied to Florida golf courses by simply multiplying the number of golf course (1400) times the average size (150 acres) by an average application of 11.7 lbs of MSMA per acre per year.

What is troubling is that the basic assumption that we apply MSMA to the total acreage of a golf course is incorrect, and thus puts the calculations way off the mark. We may be contributing arsenic to the environment, but let’s get the numbers right first. We have responded to those miscalculations.

While the arsenic levels in the samples from South Florida are higher than the threshold levels set by state and federal officials. It is not clear from the studies if the arsenic is bio-available to humans or is just a calculated statistic in a laboratory. There is another whole discussion over background arsenic levels exceeding those threshold numbers in non-golf or non-agricultural lands.

The bottom line is that we need to know if our use of a legal, EPA-approved pesticide is potentially causing a problem of human health concern. EPA will weigh in on the issue soon enough as MSMA is currently under review by the agency.

In the meantime do yourself and your golf club a favor and explore your weed-control programs to see if there are any other products you can use to control your weed problems. Consider changing your pre-emergent herbicide strategies to require less post-emergent control. Do like some clubs and initiate a daily weed hunt where each employee mechanically removes 10 weeds a day. A simple thing like that can add up in savings in the chemical budget and also help the environment.

Even if more data and testing proves the “arsenic and old lace” poison syndrome is incorrect, regulators and politicians may not be able to defend a scientific position, but will have to resort to a political decision to appease the emotional concerns of the public. It happened in the wood-preserve industry. It can happen to the green industry as well.

You can help by calculating how much MSMA you currently use from your pesticide-spraying records and sharing that information with the FGCSA. See your chapter’s external vice president for a copy of a confidential survey on MSMA use and send me your information, so researchers and regulators can get a real world handle on the issue.

...continued from page 62

-- Joel Jackson, CGCS

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“Faith enables, doctrine inhibits. In the true American grain, we are simply casting off that which has failed us. Faithless Europe meanders, while faithful Islam crumbles. We have gained an almost miraculous middle ground. A society that transcends its religious differences without losing its faith is invincible.”

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“Perhaps truest of all our cliches is that ‘ignorance is bliss.’ Men and women do not want to know. They may be pleased to learn of the misfortunes of their neighbor - confessional television shows have their roots in tribal whispers - but they do not want to know that their way of life, of belief, of organizing, learning, producing, and fighting is a noncompetitive bust. The greatest impact of this information age is that it makes the global masses aware of their inadequacy.”

“Never listen to those who warn that ferocity on our part reduces us to the level of the terrorist. That is the argument of the campus, not of the battlefield, and it insults America’s service members and the American people.”

“Any society that starves education is a loser. Cultures that do not see inherent value in education are losers. A culture that cannot produce a single world-class university is not going to conquer the world in any sphere. America’s universities are triumphant. Once beyond the silly debates (or monologues) in the liberal arts faculties, our knowledge industry has no precedent or peer. Even Europe’s most famous universities, on the Rhine or the Seine, are rotting and overcrowded. We attract the best faculty, the best researchers, and the best student minds from the entire world. This is not a trend subject to reversal; rather, it is self-reinforcing.”

Our great strengths are wealth and raw power. When we fail to bring those strengths to bear, we contribute to our own defeat. For a superpower to think small - which has been our habit across the last decade, at least - is self-defeating folly. Our response to terrorist acts should make the world gasp.”

“Although tactics may be similar, strategies for dealing with practical versus apocalyptic terror-}

ists can differ widely. Practical terror-}

ists may have legitimate grievances that deserve consideration, although their methods cannot be tolerated. Apocalyptic terrorists, no matter their rhetoric, seek your destruction and must be killed to the last man. The apt metaphor is cancer - you cannot hope for success if you only cut out part of the tumor. For the apocalyptic terrorist, evading your efforts can easily be turned into a public triumph. Our bloodiest successes will create far fewer ter-}