Have we passed saturation point in conferences?

It is hard to believe Christmas is just a couple of weeks away, and 60 days from now many of us will be heading for New Orleans for the BIG SHOW. It has been interesting to note recently the increased activity in the promotion of regional shows. Ohio and Florida have always been popular, but this year it seems I have seen more information regarding regional turf shows than ever before.

I know it makes sense to turf managers to support their regional shows. But can the suppliers to the industry continue to add regional shows and regional support to distributors and sales efforts in these uncertain economic conditions?

A major supplier to the industry recently mentioned that the company will have supplied 80 shows and exhibits in 1991.

That might be an extreme case, but I'd like to stop somewhere. Don't know the answer — if you have any comments or suggestions, please let me know.

I was head for the New Year, I am pleased to announce that we have added two new members to the editorial advisory board. Tim Hiers, CGCS, manages the 154 holes at the John's Island Club in Vero Beach, Fla. I played the West course recently, and was in awe of the natural beauty Tom Fazio was able to retain and Tim and his staff maintain. It's hard to believe some of the elevations that are part of the natural terrain of this unique property on Florida's east coast.

The other new member is Kevin Downing, CGCS. He manages Willoughby Golf Club in Stuart, Fla., and has started to get into some design work.

I've had the opportunity to work with Tim and Kevin, and found them to be true professionals. Both Tim and Kevin participated in the Golf Course News Marketing Conference in September, and along with the other members of the panel, were right on target with the subject matter under discussion.

We look forward to having Tim and Kevin on our board.

The first week of December marks the start of the 14th annual JC Penney Classic and the second year at Innisbrook's Copperhead course, where vice-president of golf operations Jay Overton and staff have a new starting hole for this mixed-team championship. As a former player, I've been fortunate to be associated with this fine tournament and look forward to a fine field of PGA Tour and LPGA Tour players.

It's the season to put priorities in perspective.

We had a good time in this issue asking superintendents around the country what they would most like to get for Christmas for their golf courses. We thank them all for sharing their dreams for their courses.

Dreaming is great. Planning is better. Reality is sometimes tough to take. My dream — ala prayer — for this Christmas season is that we would all take stock of the realities of the world around us and put our own personal world's perspective.

To not sound ethereal, I mean to say, let's place our toys, games, hobbies and even political ideas in a package, take a step back and view them for their real importance.

Two very divergent events bring this to mind — Christmas and a bizarre occurrence that happened at a Florida golf course.

First, for most people reality and priorities take a vacation during the Christmas season in America. Our society tends to turn on the lights (on the trees and houses), turn to the volume (of holiday music) and turn our heads (away from the poverty, despair and pain around us).

And, in the true meaning, the "why" of Christmas — salvation from a loving God. "For therein is born to you this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord... a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel." — Luke 2:11 and 31-32.

No giddy hamsmickers, Reality, and priorities. And, yet, reality and priorities take a vacation somewhere every day, not just Christmas. It happened one day recently for people in a golfing party at a Florida course. Buried in the news pages of Nov. 16 was a tale that, at once, made me lose a breath to shock and disbelief and accept it as another tale of where our society stands. You might hope the story is one of fancy, but the word that comes to my mind is macabre. Stephen King would be proud to include it as a queer kind of aside in one of his novels.

It seems a man died a heart attack on the 15th green. His four-ended some game, but the rest of the group, the foursome was on to playing, skipped through the 15th green where the man's body lay for two hours until authorities arrived and did their duty.

Tell me Am I wrong or is this a bold print statement on our priorities and what we human beings think of life? I don't know where this particular golfer went to spend eternity, but was his death not worth mourning? — Or were the last three holes of that round in Florida or death holes for the golfers?

The man apparently was barely worth a second thought to his golf group. "Gee, that's a good way to go," said one — probably with a "Pass my driver, please" punctuation mark.

All of us associated with the industry love golf. We depend on it for our livelihood. We practice it, play it, watch it and read about it. But how all-consuming is it? And how all-consuming are our other pastimes? Just how important is the Super Bowl, anyhow? Or the World Series? Or Wednesday night's bowling league? Or that Saturday morning round of golf?

Reality. Or can we handle it — at Christmas time — and on the golf course? — if our priorities are in the right place. Get our priorities right, and the other things will fall into place.

Now, enjoy your Christmas, remembering why we celebrate it. And, Jerry Faudel, Tim Hiers, Randy Gal, Joe Martin, Joe Esposito, George Fyfe, Tom Fisher, Jim Burton, John Granholit and all you other superintendents around the country — I hope you all get your wishes this year.

Pass the grief, please. Let's turn to the realities of December.

Pro-golf public policy campaign is must for the industry

By Larry Hawkins

The scenes in the public hearing forums of the golf development approval process have not changed significantly within the past few years. While the golf industry has made remarkable progress in accumulating stock of the realities of the world around us and put our own personal world's perspective.

The concerns and issues on golf development expressed by organizations and concerned citizens in public hearings have basically remained the same. Golf course developers, architects, engineers and planners frequently involved in the permitting process can easily predict the issues in sensitive projects. Water quality, wetlands and wildlife habitats are consistently at the top of the public's list. These are followed closely by the more politically oriented topics such as wetlands and natural resource management, and the assertion that golfers are an "elitist" special-interest group.

It doesn't seem the "critics" and "objectors" offer few, if any facts to support their negative, environmental views on golf courses. The golf industry, rightfully, maintains the position that there is a wealth of independent, government and academic studies documenting that properly designed and maintained courses do not degrade but help the environment.

Obviously, there is a broad chasm between the positive conclusions of numerous studies on course development and environmental protection, and the persistent, contrary public perceptions on environmental issues. Part of the answer to this quandary may lie in the fact that we are dealing with both technical and perceptual issues rather than technicalities. The golf development industry has a "public image" problem.

ILL-INFORMED OFFICIALS

It is evident that the public, government administrators and regulatory reviewers are not aware of the significant and recent advances in modern golf course design and maintenance, water resource and environmental management, wetlands and water quality management technologies.

Perhaps we should consider the recent environmental image problems faced by other industries and their approach toward image and perceptions. The controversies over the fast-food industry and foam packaging and metal containers, and pulp and paper industries over resource management and the resulting recycling programs have been highly publicized.

Many major industries have propelled a public image of "environmental consciousness" through public media information campaigns. You don't have to thumb through many outdoor magazines to see a full-page, color message on wetlands preservation sponsored by... Continued on page 11

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Publicity needed
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one of the major auto makers.

by government, special interest groups and mental awareness messages on recycling, industries proliferate.

development conferences, seminars and as-

would be more concerned and involved in these matters if they clearly understood that

golf course pesticides have already been found in the ground water.

Third, as I reported to GCN, "The Cape Cod study authors acknowledged the deficiencies..." some of which I have cited above.

Dr. Cohen takes me to task for not consulting him or his "geologist coauthor, Joe Senita" who, incidentally, is not even acknowledged as a study participant in the CCC report.

Finally, the attorney general's report is not clearly on these problems, perhaps he could explain why.

I am glad that Mr. Connor is promoting laser leveling to enhance the quality of the tee construction: however, this machinery, like any other, requires experienced and dedicated operators to assure that quality.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I hope you don't mind me setting the record straight a little bit.

Sincerely,
Roger Hruby, president
Sunbelt Services
Palmetto, Fla.

Editor's note: In our feature story Ed Connor indeed acknowledged that he first saw laser technology used by Sunbelt Services at Palma Ceia Country Club. He said he saw it at eye level and it looked like it was sliced with a diamond cutter. It was perfect. The technology has also been used by Alan MacCurrach at MacCurrach Golf Construction, the PGA Tour's Dave Postwaite, and, perhaps, others.

Please mail letters to: Letters, Golf Course News, P.O. Box 597, Yarmouth, ME 04096.

N.Y. attorney general rep defends his position on Cape Cod study

To the Editor:

I wish to respond to a statement by GCNSA President Stephen Cadenelli in your article entitled "N.Y. AG attacks industry chemical use" (GCN, September 1991) and to a letter by Stuart Cohen (GCN, October 1991).

Both concern the Cape Cod Golf Course study, which was conducted for the U.S. EPA and the Cape Cod Commission (CCC; formerly the Cape Cod Planning and Economic Development Commission).

I had disputed the significance ascribed to that study by some in the golf industry.

GCN quoted Mr. Cadenelli citing the Cape Cod study as proof that "properly applied golf course chemicals pose no threat to ground waters."

The Cape Cod study provides no such proof. Indeed, the study suffered from several deficiencies (discussed below) but nevertheless discovered no less than 10 pesticides/pesticide metabolites in the ground water sampled.

On Long Island and Cape Cod there is simply no question that golf course pesticides have already been detected in the ground water.

Even so, the Cape Cod results cannot simply be extrapolated to Long Island. At the four Cape Cod courses, annual application rates ranged from 2.7 to 4.4 pounds of active ingredients per acre of golf course, while Long Island courses reported annual application rates up to 22 pounds of active ingredient per acre.

Clearly, differences in application rates and local hydrogeological factors contribute to differences in the impacts.

In his letter Dr. Cohen identifies himself as the Cape Cod study "director... and first or sole author of two articles published." Certainly he must be aware of the fall report on this same study ("Cape Cod Golf Course Monitoring Project," June 1990) by the Cape Cod Commission (CCC) Water Resources Office.

The CCC report notes several deficiencies in the study which I pointed out to GCN. Dr. Cohen apparently now denies these problems.

First, when interviewed by GCN, I explained that some of the wells were dug too deep to detect surface-applied pesticides.

Dr. Cohen responded that all monitoring wells... were screened at or just below the water table.

But the CCC report states (p. 46) that "... study protocol called for the wells to be de-

signed such that 3 feet of the installed 5-foot screen would penetrate the water table."

Unfortunately, the screens were not placed at consistent depths at each of the golf courses.

Many of the wells were drilled so that the whole screen was below the water table; in one, the top of the screen was 11 feet below the water table."

The CCC report continues to explain that "... the deeper wells would be sampling water from a different recharge event from a different area."

Second, I explained to GCN that some wells were placed where they would not efficiently intercept leaching pesticides.

Dr. Cohen claims that all of the green, tee and fairway wells... were placed at the edge of these areas so that ground water would be sampled that was influenced by turf management of greens, tees or fairways as appropriate.

The CCC report (p. 47) recognized that proximity alone is not enough, but that the direction of ground water flow must be considered.

It states that "...regional water tables were used to place the wells at points which were believed to capture ground water off designated course features (greens, tees, fairways)."

Unfortunately many of the wells receive flood water that avoids or only partially captures flow off the areas of concern.

Third, as I reported to GCN, "The Cape Cod study authors acknowledged the deficiencies..." some of which I have cited above.

Dr. Cohen takes me to task for not consulting him or his "geologic coauthor, Joe Senita" who, incidentally, is not even acknowledged as a study participant in the CCC report.

There was no need to consult him or the editors of the CCC report, when it spoke clearly on these problems, perhaps he could explain why.

Finally, the attorney general's report is not an attack on the potential for ground water contamination from the use of pesticides on golf courses. On Cape Cod and Long Island, golf course pesticides have already been found in the ground water.

The challenge now is the development of appropriate means to help assure that golf courses coexist without damaging critical ground water resources.

Rather than deny the obvious, Dr. Cohen, in his current role as consultant to the golf industry, might best focus his efforts on helping his clients choose wisely, and use sparingly, the pesticides they apply.

Sincerely,
Michael H. Surgan, Ph.D.
NY State Department of Law

Sunbelt used laser tech

To the Editor:

I found your October issue article on laser technology very interesting. It seems Mr. Connor was fortunate enough to witness our laser leveling unit operating at Palm Ceia Country Club. I like to think he "borrowed" our concept to promote a method of building better tee boxes. As mentioned, we have used laser leveling for agricultural and preparation for many years.

I'm glad that Mr. Connor is promoting laser leveling to enhance the quality of the tee construction: however, this machinery, like any other, requires experienced and dedicated operators to assure that quality.

You might be interested to know that two of our most satisfied customers include Mr. Connor, who employed our laser leveling at Seminole Golf Club and Pinehurst No. 2, where we recently leved tee

Thank you very much for your consideration. I hope you don't mind me setting the record straight a little bit.

Sincerely,
Roger Hruby, president
Sunbelt Services
Palmetto, Fla.

Editor's note: In our feature story Ed Connor indeed acknowledged that he first saw laser technology used by Sunbelt Services at Palma Ceia Country Club. He said he saw it at eye level and it looked like it was sliced with a diamond cutter. It was perfect. The technology has also been used by Alan MacCurrach at MacCurrach Golf Construction, the PGA Tour's Dave Postwaite, and, perhaps, others.

Please mail letters to: Letters, Golf Course News, P.O. Box 597, Yarmouth, ME 04096.

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