

## Media, Feldman should get the story straight on pesticide use, versus salt and aspirin

To the editor:

In response to the article by Peter Blais in the March issue of *Golf Course News*, which states that Jay Feldman feels golf courses use too much pesticide as compared to agricultural users.

Did Mr. Feldman compare the land used for agriculture to that used for golf courses? I believe more land is used for agriculture than for golf courses in this country.

Mr. Feldman said golf courses use 18 pounds per acre as compared to 2.3 pounds for soybean. What about corn, wheat, vegetable crops, and let us not forget the fruit industry that uses its share of pesticides.

But, of course, no one wants to say anything about John Doe who puts pesticides on his lawn without

reading the label or having a license to do so.

Secondly, the sarcastic remark made by Mr. Stossel about "left to our own devices, superintendents would poison our customers and kill the town" is just another report of someone jumping on the bandwagon with sensationalistic reporting.

Mr. Stossel fails to report to the public some facts about Lt. Prior as stated in *The Florida Green*, 1987 issue, such as, "Lt. Prior's involvement in top-secret biological warfare and the possibilities of its contribution to his death."

(I have read that Lt. Prior died of a rare skin disease rather than chemical poisoning. However, I can not quote where I read that.)

Also, why did the Navy conduct a closed-door autopsy and investi-

gation into his death? "No Daconil 2787 was found in any of Lt. Prior's tissue or body fluid — just on his shoes, clubs and golf balls."

Mr. Stossel and Mr. Feldman fail to recognize that golf course superintendents and crews spend two to three times as many hours on the golf course as do golfers.

We certainly do not want to poison ourselves or anyone else. Superintendents and their spray technicians are licensed with their respective states before they can dispense a pesticide.

A few more facts as stated in *The Florida Green*, spring 1987, pages 51-52:

- Daconil 2787, also called Bravo, is used on nearly all vegetables and fruits.

- Considerably more people suffer from allergies to seafood, milk, pollen and grass itself, than they do to Daconil 2787 on golf balls.

- In laboratory tests, it takes three times as much Daconil 2787 than table salt to kill test animals and 13 times more than aspirin.

- One alleged death due to Daconil 2787 is negligible compared to golf course deaths that occur due to insect attacks, lightning, heat stroke, heart attacks, and even golfers being struck by balls.

It seems that the news media is trying to compare golf courses to hazardous waste dumps without foundation!

Dennis C. Cassidy  
Superintendent  
White River Golf Course  
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*Editor's note: In fairness to John Stossel of ABC Television, tongue was firmly planted in cheek when he said the general concern surrounding golf courses and pesticides seems to boil down to whether "left to your own devices, you (superintendents) would poison your customers and kill the town."*

### Letters...

Letters to the editor are welcome. Address them to: Letters, *Golf Course News*, P.O. Box 997, Yarmouth, ME 04096



"THE FLAGS WERE THE ONLY CONCESSION WE HAD TO MAKE TO OBTAIN OUR FINANCING."

## Add an acronym for gopher society

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What about bombs and smoke devices? "Those," he grinned, "are really a gas. It's a kick to watch a grown man on his hands and knees lighting a fat stick, jam it into a hole and then madly cover the hole with soil. Then they sniff—without fail, they sniff the air." He went on to explain that throughout the labyrinth of gopher colonies are circulating fans. "When smoke comes, we turn on the fans and direct it into the club bar through the plumbing. There's so much cigar smoke they never know the difference." He grinned a toothy grin.

We got around to the big question. Why? Why do gophers adamantly choose golf courses on which to ply their trade. Greg was

thoughtful for a moment, then said, "I guess it has to be the scenery. Golf courses are such beautiful places and the superintendents do such a fine job keeping them that way."

I queried with, "Well, if they make life so good for you, don't you feel any guilt about making life miserable for them?"

"Not really," he answered. "We provide employment for many people." He looked embarrassed, then added, "Ok. We could go easy on the supers, but Man, those Greens committees. If you could be in our paws, listening to those guys telling the supers how to maintain a course, complaining about the greens and frequently threatening the greenskeepers' jobs, you'd want to

retaliate."

Failing to find any logic in his argument, I changed the subject. "I guess there have been gophers as long as there have been golfers."

"Longer," he said. "If you consult your Bible, you'll find that God commanded Noah to build his ark of gopherwood."

I saw our time was about up. As Greg shrugged into his tiny parka, I asked the final question.

"Why not enjoy the golf course, but do your digging someplace adjacent to it? I mean, you continually face danger, frustration, humiliation and get bad-tempered. Why do you stay on the golf course?"

He shrugged his furry shoulders. "Why do you play golf?" he countered.



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