Reflecting back and looking forward for GCN

By Charles von Brecht

As I write this column on a flight, heading home to St. Petersburg, Fla., after barely escaping an all-night snowstorm in Maine, I reflect on the last few years of Golf Course News.

Less than three years ago, it was a non-entity. We launched with a premiere issue at the '89 GCSAA show in Anaheim, Calif. I will remember that particular event forever with both fondness and sadness. Sadly, I buried my father just a day or two before we headed west and quite frankly, I'm sorry that he is not here to share with me the success that Golf Course News has enjoyed. My fond memories of the show were the evident positive comments from prospective readers and advertisers on the need for a publication like ours. That positive reaction has come to fruition as we end the year and begin a new one with this issue.

What's in store for 1992? You will see some consistent, though subtle, changes. Our commitment to the industry is stronger than ever, and our goal is to be the Number One publication in the industry. We're not far from that goal. Our average qualified circulation already has surpassed Golf Course Management, and we're growing significantly in ad pages as they decline.

We will introduce new editorial features in an ongoing effort to bring to our readers all the important news of the industry. We most likely will expand our staff to enhance our editorial quality and credibility. And we will add at least one more industry-related conference to our schedule in the coming year.

Many industries are suffering during this recession, and golf is not immune. But courses still are being planned and opened coast to coast. The National Golf Foundation and our editors say 250-300 new courses will open in 1992. Added to that are many major renovations. Halldedup to increased business for suppliers and employment opportunities. Several of our advertisers tell me 1991 was their best year ever and they are planning for another good year in 1992.

A lot can happen in a year — and a year from now I will look back on this report and see just how we're doing at that time. I look forward to another positive update. Have a happy and prosperous New Year!

Some tids and bits from a great year — 1991

By Mark Leslie

Some odds and ends, favorites and not-so-favorites picked up from the wonderful year of 1991.

Some of my favorite tidbits come from the fall hurricane season. Here are a few:

How'd they get those ships in the buckets? My favorite story from Hurricane Grace, which tore into the Atlantic Coast last fall, came from Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The story goes like this: Driven by 78 mph winds, ferocious waves crashed over a house and drove a house partially off its foundation. Another wave deposited a boat in the basement, and yet another moved the house back close to its original position on the foundation. When the owner arrived and walked down the cellar steps, what to his wondering eyes should appear? A boat sitting in deep water in his basement.

A storm, a cleanup, an auction: "I've got a propane tank here. Do I hear two? Yes, two, over here. Can anyone raise that? A refrigerator? Yes, a refrigerator over here. Can anyone top a refrigerator? A Catamaran from that man in the red shirt. That's our bid, a Catamaran. Do I hear... A house?"? Hurricane Grace left a lot of memories on the East Coast. But most memorable to some golf course superintendents were the things left on their courses by the flooding ocean waters.

The Mr. Community Service Award: Step on up and get your plaque, Rich Caughhey. The superintendent at Wattlebury Country Club in North Scituate, Mass., Caughhey put his six-man crew to work clearing three feet of sand off the North Scituate and Minut roads so people could return to their homes following Hurricane Grace.

Best quote in the wake (sorry (Continued on page 33)

Golf's 'Megafactors' in the 1990s spelled out

By Steven H. Lesnick

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In defense of Cape Cod study

To the Editor: The New York Attorney General's office attacked Long Island golf courses this summer in a report that contain some interesting facts and survey results, much conjecture, and much sensationalist anti-pesticide, anti-golf course verbigrace (GCN, Sept. '91, p. 11).)

When Dr. Michael C. Sargan, a co-author of the AG's report, criticized the Cape Cod study, I responded with a professionally written, scientific-political commentary (GCN, Oct. '91, p. 13). I was the director of the study and published the results in February 1990 in two publications.

Sargan then attacked my defense and some statements made by GCSCA President Stephen Cardenelli (GCN, Dec. '91, p. 11.) In my response, I pointed out Sargan's attack once and for all. I would like to make some general comments.

First, this type of politicized polar- ization of the golf course issue, which the AG's report has become, is becoming passe among many of the elected and career officials with whom I deal around the country.

Increasingly, I find them willing to listen to science. This science takes the form of the state-of-the-art risk assessments and monitoring efforts, conducted by the integrated golf course management plans (IGCMPs).

The IGCMPs use proven techniques of integrated pest management, fertil- ization, construction, etc., to mini- mize the health and minimize the need for pesticides. It is a developing government/ golf industry/citizen partnership that allows the use of scientific and organizational tools that issue anti-golf course reports with a questionable basis.

Second, people aren't really care about the environment should be careful about issuing reports such as "Toxic Fairways" (the AG's re- port), because others may ignore whatever good recommendations and information the report contains. The AG's report actually contains many recommendations and useful information, but the average person knowledgeable in this area would probably not take this report seriously because it is mostly just a diatribe attacking golfers, its authors, such as this can sometimes cause the pendulum to swing in the other direction, away from the environ- mental cause.

Dr. Sargan's second set of re- marks to the press can be rebutted as follows.

The monitoring wells were appropriate for detecting shallow contamination. This was thor- oughly explained in my GCN letter (Dec. '91, p. 11), and supported by references to two peer-reviewed publications, one of which presented the results of the Cape Cod study, the other discussed results from Long Island (the subject of "Toxic Fairways"). Sargan skipped right over the science, the peer-re- viewed literature—and cited a reference that was written by people by whom I never met and who never participated in the study.

Had he looked in the appendix of the December 1991 AG report,piel have noticed that no justification was provided for the statement "in one case the top of the screen was 11 feet below the water table." This statement is wrong. One need only look at Table 1 of our Cape Cod paper published in the peer-reviewed literature (Ground Water Monitoring Review, vol. 10 (1), pp. 140-170) to see that the greatest screen-top depth had to be shallower than 9.5 feet, depending on the thick- ness of the bottom plag and/or well foot. Even the Cape Cod Commission report Sargan cites states...the tops of the screens mostly range from 2 feet below to 2 feet above the water table.

I refer to Cadenelli's re- marks that discuss pesticide use rates was misleading. While it appears the Sargan's December statement was true about the use rates may be true ("...Long Island courses reported annual application rates up to 22 pounds of active ingredient per acre.") Table 1 in the "Toxic Fair- ways" report, which he coauthored, also contained other relevant information.

For example, it is interesting to note that the average use rate is 7.7 lb/acre. Also, approximately 22 of the 52 golf courses in the GA report has pesticide use rates that exceed the federal Food and Drug Code made quote by Sargan in his December letter (2.74-4 b/h).

Although I agree that it can be difficult to extrapolate results from one study site to another, one must be careful about making sensationalist remarks regarding pesticide use rates. I have not, as far as I know, represented a government agency. Placement of the wells was in or immediately adjacent to turf areas. Wells were specifically designed to maximize the chances of detecting turf chemicals, within the constraints of practical considerations and the need to obtain results from different management areas—tees, greens, fairways, and background wells.

Dr. Sargan's letter was profes- sionally written until the last para- graph. What seemed to have offended some of his points, and he may have been hamstrung by the AG's report, but it could have been one of these issues where professional people just agree to disagree, and walk away without enmity.

Unfortunately, Sargan decided to get personal in the last paragraph. In my opinion, the S. Environmental Protection Agency, I never wrote such an ar- rogant potshot. While I don't pre- tend to understand career counseling for Dr. Sargan as he has done for me, I would counsel his supervisors to review his corre- spondence in the future.

However, this can be taken with a grain of salt. For Iansilnnaeunvenagh to believe that good science will win out over bad politics in the long run, although there may be momentary setbacks along the way.

Sincerely,
Stuart Z. Cohen, Ph.D.
Environmental & Turf Services, Inc.

Apathy, excuses are the culprits

To the Editor: Your trade newspaper does a good job of keeping people up to date on golf course issues, but please spare us your personal views on abortion and gun control. This is not in the paper. Apathy and excuses instead are leading the country into a reduction in personal rights.

Secondly, don't applaud the re- search community of apathy and lack of interest. Obviously you are unaware of the demands placed on researchers by the U.S. Government. For example, I see budget cuts con- tinually reducing research funds and increasing work loads. A re- searcher is very willing to present the facts "armed with research documentation to help quell the storm." However, the same storm quiets up repeatedly with the same research, as if the research wasn't presented at all.

Education of the public must be done by everyone in the industry, and not just as a potential marketing angle, but to deal with the real environ- mental issues we face.

Sincerely,
Paul G. Johnson, S.T. Paul, Minn.

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

'Megafactors' will drive golf industry through the decade

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cilly requires a minimum of around 150 acres. In urban settings, how- ever, that much land is unavailable, unsellable or too expensive to de- velop. Land is becoming scarce in the suburbs ringing our urban cen- ters.

The trend toward longer week- end leisure activities and week-end golf is returning us to the turf to roll some more, just about the flight of a good drive — the sky, growing smaller and smaller, the horizon, turning red. It is, after all, why we're in this game itself, our most important el- ement and advocate. There is something compelling about golf's

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