Pioneers of public-access

W e pay a great deal of attention to the public-access golf course market in the pages of this publication. Indeed, Golf Course News prides itself on being "daily-access so we wouldn't have to say "daily, municipal, semi-private and resort" every time we referred to the largest portion of this country's 15,000-plus golf facilities.

Five years ago when the boom in public-access development was in full swing, Golf Course News decided to create an educational forum for the owners, superintendents and developers of these facilities. Why? Because even then, back in 1990, while public-access courses accounted for half the market in terms of revenue-generating, Inc. conference and trade show that served this vibrant market sector.

That was five years ago.

During the ensuing five years more than 2,000 golf courses have opened nationwide — a full 80 percent of them public-access. Today daily-access, municipal, semi-private and resort facilities account for more than two-thirds of American golf courses. Ninety percent of those courses now under construction are public-access, so don't expect the trend to change anytime soon.

With the fifth Public Golf Forum scheduled for October 27-29, in Chicago, I want to take time here to salute all those individuals and those who have spoken at the Forum over the years for their key role in the market changing and making it their business to prepare their golf industry colleagues for the unique challenges that lay ahead. Special thanks go to our keynote speakers: the inimitable Arnold Palmer, architect Robert Trent Jones Jr., Alice, Perry and B.B. Dye, and ClubCorp Chairman Robert Dedman.

Add to that prestigious list golfer, designer and certified character Peter Jacobsen who will keynote The 1996 Golf Course News Public Golf Forum in May. But why are they so prestigious? Because they are on the cutting-edge, always on the forefront of the golf industry. It's fascinating how the two so often play out in concert. A case in point affecting the golf industry is the National Audubon Society's President John Flicker to replace A.A. Berle, and the ensuing warming relationship with Audubon International (Audubon) and its Audubon Society of New York State branch. The two associations have been in a heated battle for several years over Audubon having created the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and begun working with nature's "enemy" — golf courses. Ever since, NAS has vocally and energetically — not to mention wrongly — blasted AI as a rogue group.

Yet, the NAS leadership has been purged, to an extent, and the fence has been removed. Thus, in 1995, we published "When making inroads with National Audubon," said AI President Ron Dodson. "A couple of months ago, we had two NAS staff people in the office, talking about working the Audubon Blue. [Frank B.] Gill [NAS's new director of science] was here. Later, we received some complimentary letters back from them.

Next is a meeting between Dodson and Flicker to discuss "program philosophy, direction, and so forth."

"My ultimate hope," Dodson said, "is that we can learn to support each other where we can and avoid getting to the point — why do I think we ever will — that we will endorse each other's programs or philosophies on everything. The line that we're all busy. There are a lot of environmental issues all we need to work on.

"I'm hoping, if nothing else, we'll get at least some correspondence generated from them, communicating with their chapters that some of the correspondence sent out from the previous section of National Audubon is no longer in effect; that while they do not do the same kind of program we do, all philosophically are trying to help people do good things for the environment; and that using personal anecdotes and casting disparaging remarks about fellow environmental organization's concerns with the environment is not to be pursued any longer."

While NAS can still disagree with AI's work on the course, Dodson added, "they don't have to put out shaded half-truths, morally, that make people question our integrity and personal attacks on me and my staff. I want to get over that.

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OTOH, the auditing of the course..."
EVOLUTION.

Phillips comment: The Public Golf Forum
Continued from page 10
mix, meet and network with hundreds of Forum attendees, the public-access superintendents, owners and developers who are shaping the future of the golf course industry? I urge you to join us in Chicago and afford yourself the same opportunity.

This just in (only a year late):
A survey of U.S. nitrogen fertilizer manufacturers indicates the industry reduced its industrial emissions, as reported on the annual Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) by 3.6 percent in 1994, as compared to the previous year. Also, a survey of U.S. phosphate fertilizer manufacturers shows the industry reduced its emissions (as reported on the annual TRI) by 65.6 percent in 1994.

Ladies and gentlemen, a nice round of applause for the fertilizer industry, which has chosen to address it emission issues before the heavy-hand of regulation lowers the boom. Indeed, these decreases were posted despite increases in production.

Both surveys, conducted by the International Fertilizer Development Center for the Washington, D.C.-based Fertilizer Institute, are compilations of information reported annually to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Community Right-To-Know Law. EPA's involvement probably explains why we're just now getting figures for 1994... Ha! Just kidding!

In truth, when it comes matters of Red Tape, EPA has really cleaned up its act. In February we reported on innovative fast-track registration programs EPA created to more quickly accommodate reduced-risk chemicals. Last month, we reported on EPA's hugely successful effort to reduce the number of scientific studies chemical manufacturers conduct — and re-conduct — in support of products applying for reregistration.

The time and money saved by this program should be enough to silence even EPA's harshest critics — for a couple of weeks, at least.

More Updates: The Budd Family of Winston Salem announced July 11 that it has completed its acquisition of Lofes Seed, Inc. As we noted in our earlier story on the sale (GCNMay 1996), no discernible changes in the Loft's proprietary name or product line are expected.

Also from the unfinished department, AgrEvo USA Co. and The Nu-Gro Corp. of Woodstock, Ontario, Canada have completed transfer of AgrEvo's Nitroform/Nutralene business to Nu-Gro's U.S. subsidiary, OmniScience, Inc. of Gloversville, N.Y.

Though OmniScience and AgrEvo jointly honored existing prices and marketing programs through July 31, new programs — expected to be similar — were scheduled to be announced Aug. 1.

Rodgers comment
Continued from previous page
to adhere to:
18. Filtration: The degree and type of filtration depends on the water source. At minimum insist on Wye Strainer with a 20 mesh screen. On the extreme end there are systems that will filter down to 5 micron (1 micron = .00004 inches).

19. Main Disconnect: This is usually required by utility companies and could become a big expense if left off and required later.

20. 120-Volt Power Conditioner: The only item that has remained constant in the golf course irrigation industry is power. If you have power to operate the pumps you can count on power to operate the irrigation system. It is our policy to use the pump location as our sole power source. It's very important to send proper voltages to the solid state controllers. If a power conditioner is called for, be sure it is included.

The Bottom Line:
Don't evaluate solely on today's price. Use GM vs. Cadillac example. Not every course needs a Cadillac, but you better understand what you don't need and how that translates into the final cost. Initial bid quotes, ignorance or simply going with your buddy down the road should not play a role in the final decision.

Also, don't buy technology just for technology's sake. Buy it for what it can do for you. VFD alone isn't the answer, the software that operates the VFD is the answer.

Following specifications protects short-term and long-term interests, for with pump stations, what you specify is what you get.

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