# Turf speakers bureau the next step in battle for public opinion

or years we've urged superintendents to take a larger role in their communities, to join local conservation commissions, to speak to garden clubs, to share their knowledge of turf and the environment with potentially skeptical neighbors. What better way to convince people that course managers aren't the spray-wielding, leach-happy, pesticidal maniacs they're often portrayed to be?

In this vein, we offer our applause to RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment), the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the Pro-

fessional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA). These three organizations have taken it upon themselves to form a speakers bureau, supplying turf-industry toastmasters, if you will, to groups in the Midwest and, eventually, nationwide (see story page 53)

Modeled after a similar and successful program administered by the American Crop Protection Association, the Ambassador Speakers Program is a vital step forward in the battle for public opinion.



Hal Phillips,

However, even a program as admirable as the Ambassadors will not succeed on its own. While national or regional exposure is never a detriment, we are convinced that golf's positive environmental story must be disseminated on a local

level to truly take hold. In other words, a superintendent can make as important an impression on his or her Rotary Club as any heavyweight can at the Pennsylvania Legislative Summit.

Think and act national. Think and act local.

After months of breathless anticipation (!), cutting-edge superintendents and turf types can now access the electronic edition of *Golf Course News* at www.golfcoursenews.com.

We've tried to make the Online Edition wholly separate from the print version you now hold in your hand. For example, most of the stories now on the web site have not been published in *Golf Course News*. When we finish a story, up it goes. We envision GCN Online as our opportunity to provide breaking golf industry news.

In addition to these early-edition articles, GCN Online features selected coverage from *GCN International*, which covers the golf industry everywhere in the world outside the United States. In addition, GCN Online means you can access the largest newproduct showcase on the web. Then there's our comprehensive list of management companies and their client courses.

Also, we've compiled an exhaustive list of golf- and turf-related web sites, all of which are accessible by logging onto GCN Online. Suppose you're trying to find a web site that has something to do with golf but you don't know the web address. Simply access GCN Online, go to our "On the Links" page and you'll find it listed alongside dozens of other golf sites. Click on the site you want and a hypertext link will take you there — free of charge!

Soon we will archive back issues of *Golf Course News*, enabling browsers to search for stories and issues dating back to 1989. The GCN Buyer's Guide will also be uploaded, providing you vital information on the entire universe of golf industry firms.

Enjoy.

## The perils of a second Clinton Administration?

hile a Republican Congress and Democratic president cross swords over the next four years, and maybe share lock-up cells, perhaps the golf industry will survive. But will it be more difficult?

Although Congress has fulfilled 80odd percent of the Republicans'
Contract with America, there is no
sight of major tax reform — no
across-the-board cuts, no corporate
gains tax reductions, no elimination of the
estate tax, no flat-tax proposal, let alone
campaign finance reform.

Election-year promises? Seems so, so far. And though conservatives may lick their chops at the thought of our president in the slammer, I can think of no more disruptive occurrence for our society. That would put the nation — and the economy — in limbo... or worse. The golf industry continues to move along, probably about 400 more courses in 1996, and it does not need a national emergency of this magnitude. Contemplate it just for a minute, please.

Plus, the Bible urges us to "pray for your leaders..." so that you can live in peace. With the New Year being ushered in, this appears to be a good time to begin.



Mark Leslie, managing editor

One sign of the impact a second-term Administration can have is new limits on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Nation Wide Permit (NWP) 26, which considerably tightens development around wetlands (*see page 1*). What can be wrought by a second-term official — they need only be a Cabinet member — who needs not worry about re-election?

"When the Democrats got re-elected, the regulatory people felt a little more

aggressive," surmised Ron Boyd, president of Williamsburg Environmental Group, Inc. when talking about NWP 26. "Once Clinton got reelected they tightened up on these 'Nation Wides' and took the chance the Republicans wouldn't override it."

Speed kills: According to U.S. Golf Association Green Section Mid-Continent Director Paul Vermeulen, in 1976 Seattle GC had the fastest Stimpmeter readings on the West Coast: 8 feet, 5 inches. San Francisco and Bel-Air were at 6-10 and Los Angeles Country Club was at 7-0. At an increased speed of a foot every 10 years, pretty soon we can all putt on the NASA launching pad.

Never say golf course architects are humorless. Asked what effects the Baby Boomer

generation will have on golf courses, American Society of Golf Course Architects comic Jeffrey Brauer mentioned one impact I bet you never thought of: "The course managers will have to stock more Maloox and Pepto Bismal." Not to be outdone, colleague John LaFoy recalled: "At Birmingham CC they put railroad ties along the perimeters of all the golf holes. The members said it really was nice but it was hard getting the carts up over them."

Some of my favorite comments from the Maintenance Track at Public Golf Forum (see Forum-related stories on pages 15 and 62).

• "You can spend a long time in a filing cabinet, or you can get a computer." — Kevin Ross, superintendent at Country Club of the Rockies

#### VERN PUTNEY 1919 -1996

Vern Putney, the original associate editor of *Golf Course News* and founder of the Maine Golf Hall of Fame, died Dec. 21 following a brief illness. He was 77.

Putney twice was named Maine Sportswriter of the Year while a reporter for the Portland Press Herald and Evening Express. The Lynn, Mass., native was once a club professional and started a golf caddying school as well as organized scores of tournaments in Maine.

Shortly after GCN launched in 1989, he suffered heart failure. He recovered and worked parttime for the newspaper until his death.

## COLF COURSE NEWYS

Publisher

Charles E. von Brecht

Editorial Director

Editor Hal Phillips

Hal Phillips

Managing Editor Mark A. Leslie

Associate Editor Peter Blais

**Editorial Assistant** 

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Contributing Editors
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Country Club of the Rockies Brent Wadsworth Wadsworth Construction

#### **Editorial Office**

Golf Course News
Box 997, 38 Lafayette Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096
207-846-0600; Fax: 207-846-0657
hphillips@golfcoursenews.com
mleslie@golfcoursenews.com
pblais@golfcoursenews.com

### Advertising Offices National Sales:

Charles E. von Brecht Box 997, 38 Lafayette Street Yarmouth, ME 04096 207-846-0600; Fax: 207-846-0657 charliev@golfcoursenews.com Western Sales:

Robert Sanner

Western Territory Manager 2141 Vermont Lawrence, KS 66046 913-842-3969; fax: 913-842-4304

Marketplace Sales: Diana Costello-Lee

207-846-0600; fax: 207-846-0657 **Public Golf Forum Sales** Michael Lafaso 207-846-0600; fax: 207-846-0657

#### Subscription Information

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# Letters

#### FLORIDA MAYOR'S ACTIONS TOUCH NERVES IN WISCONSIN

To the editor:

The Tallahassee, Fla. mayor obviously thinks, as do so many politicians, that rules apply to others and not to him [GCN, November 1996].

In my opinion he is the one who should be suspended without pay, not the golf course employee who was doing the job he's paid for. If the rules apply to other residents, members and nonmembers, why don't they apply to the mayor?

Scott Krause, owner/manager PGA Master Professional Course operations consultant Muskego Lakes CC Muskego, Wis. To the editor:

Mike Osley, the employee of Hilamare Golf Course in Tallahassee, Fla., who turned the sprinkler system on Mayor Ron Weaver ought to have been commended instead of disciplined with suspension and loss of pay [GCN, November 1996].

Does Weaver, being the mayor, believe he is above abiding by course rules which others are expected to follow? Apparently he had no business playing before the 7 a.m. opening hour and fully deserved the soaking, perhaps even a reprimand.

Les Willard, owner Eden Valley Par 3 Richland Center, Wis.