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A Maverick's Theory
Michigan State's Joe Vargas says there's no need to rotate fungicides for proper resistance management. So what are many superintendents to make of his notion, which goes against everything they've been taught?
By Larry Aylward

Small Town Comes Back to Life as a Golf Course
Partners attain their dream with low-budget jewel — Old English GC
By Bruce Allar

The Price of Progress
Now that plant growth regulators have evolved into an integral turf-maintenance tool, the next step for manufacturers is to lower their cost.
By Frank H. Andorka Jr.

Lighten Up
While expected to deliver carpet-like fairways, superintendents aren't over-relying on insecticide use to get the job done.
By Larry Aylward
Assistant superintendents ponder their fate in a tight job market.

About the cover
We sought Seattle-based Corbis Images to obtain the cool image of the man in deep thought.

Real-Life Solutions
A Wetland Wonder
Architect, builder had to be at their best to build a golf course amid flood plains, marshes and streams.
By Mark Leslie

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Events

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

APRIL

9 USGA Green Section Regional Seminar
Little Rock, Ark.
Contact 972-492-3663

9 West Virginia GCSA Seminar: Labor Issues
Clendenin, W. Va.
Contact 304-341-8021

9 Central Texas GCSA Monthly Meeting
New Braunfels, Texas
Contact 512-892-3664

10 GCSAA Seminar: Management Strategies for the Turfgrass System
Palm Desert, Calif.
Contact 800-472-7878

15 North Texas GCSA's Monthly Meeting
Irving, Texas
Contact 817-430-0445

16 Cactus and Pines GCSA's Annual Meeting
Scottsdale, Ariz.
Contact 480-609-6778

22 USGA Green Section Regional Seminar
Honolulu
Contact 253-858-2266

23 Maine GCSA Meeting
Saco, Maine
Contact 207-282-9892

27-May 2 American Society of Golf Course Architects Annual Meeting
Santa Barbara, Calif.
Contact 312-372-7090

MAY

1 Turfgrass IPM
Davis, Calif.
Contact 530-757-8899

2-6 19th Annual American Society of Irrigation Consultants National Conference
Tucson, Ariz.
Contact 312-372-7090

Let us know about your events. Send information to Frank Andorka at 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130-3609. Fax information to 440-891-2675 or e-mail to fandorka@advanstar.com.

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Going Postal

Disagreeing with Duncan

I was pleased to see January's theme ("The Politics of Water"). As Heacock knows, certification is a voluntary program designed to offer superintendents the opportunity to increase their knowledge. It wasn't a guarantee that all who enter the program would be exceptional superintendents. I would note, however, that since the inception of the certification program, surveys reveal that certified superintendents have moved out ahead of their non-certified colleagues on salaries and prestigious jobs.

The program wasn't designed to promote certified superintendents over non-certified ones. There are many highly qualified superintendents who are not certified. Ironically, there are more non-certified superintendents attending the educational seminars than certified ones, so apparently they must believe it's not a waste of time as you do. Anyone who believes there is nothing to gain by continued education has his head in the sand.

I'm not sure how you arrived at the conclusion the CGCS implies something it doesn't deliver since the program's main focus is to provide the tools necessary for superintendents to improve themselves. As with any profession, there are no guarantees, no matter what letters someone has after their name.

Clifford A. Wagener
Certified Superintendent
Past President, GCSAA
Modesto, Calif.

Editor's Note: Heacock issued a clarification of his remarks in the December 2001 issue at the end of his column.

Quit Gripping About Golfers

The article written by Joel Jackson, "Golfers are Like Sausage Eaters (February)," once again confirms for me that a good portion of the people working in golf course maintenance have an "Us vs. Those Dumb Golfers" attitude. This attitude serves absolutely no professional purpose, but it's no surprise to me. I've seen it in various forms my whole career.

On the other hand, I have worked with superintendents who realize that the "sausage eaters" are paying the bills. It's not their job to know everything that goes into having a golf course in good shape. After all, that's how I look at my job. If I don't meet the needs of my golfers, they'll go somewhere else to play.

Too many superintendents, however, carry an underlying contempt for golfers. This contempt is corrosive, such that it keeps superintendents focused on what they're upset about instead of doing something about it.

If Jackson is director of communications for the Florida GCSA, I would advise him to start communicating what he thinks Florida golfers need to know about superintendents and quit writing insulting articles about the people his business is supposed to be serving.

John Fiander, PGA Professional
Sleepy Hollow GC
Brecksville, Ohio

American, And Proud of It

Maybe your magazine should think twice about printing further articles by Mark Leslie. His article about golf course labor is a big slap in the face to all Americans ('Looking for Golf Course Labor in All the Right Places,' February).

This is the typical kind of reasoning that is hurting our workforce in general. The practice Leslie describes is in line with the likes of big business moving their factories to Mexico and importing all kinds of cheap junk manufactured in the Far East. Going outside of the United States for labor is ludicrous.

How are our kids supposed to pay for ever-increasing tuitions? All superintendents should hire Americans. They should buy American products whenever possible. If they cost a little more, so be it. Your grandkids will thank you.

Jerry Lange,
Second Assistant Superintendent
Bunker Hill GC
Dubuque, Iowa

Editor's Note: Don't shoot the messenger. Leslie is just reporting the news.

Feel like going postal? We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Frank Andorka at fandorka@advanstar.com, fax to 440-881-2675 or send them via snail-mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Make sure to include your name and phone number for verification. Letters may be edited for length or relevance.
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QUELANT-Ca
I turned 40 last month. I still feel — and usually act — like I’m a college sophomore, but chronologically I’m now in my fifth decade. Just to rub it in, when asked how old his daddy is, my 6-year-old will happily chime, “As old as dirt!”

I always thought that, as you grew older, you would have all the answers. But curiously, now that I’m officially as old as dirt, I seem to have more questions than answers. Here are a few that have been puzzling me lately...

- Which is better: bald or gray?
- Why do they call it “syringing” a green? I’ve yet to see anyone perform this task with a hypodermic needle.
- Why do golfers — particularly Tour players — increasingly expect perfect lies in bunkers? As our good friend Tim Moraghan replies when the pros complain about bunkers in USGA events, “It’s a hazard. You’re not supposed to be in there.”
- Did it ever occur to you that some of the chemical companies’ names that would work well in Dr. Seuss stories? (“Little Erasmus Mac-Dentis played a tune on his Syngenta-Aventis.”)
- If these high-powered new balls and titanium clubs are so great, why do I still stink?
- Why isn’t there a rule that makes it legal for a superintendent to smack anyone with a five iron? who asks, “So what do you do all winter?” At the very least, all superintendents should be supplied with a list of snappy comebacks to this question, such as “I pack up the van and follow the Grateful Dead around” or “I could tell you, but then I’d have to kill you.”
- Why not hold a Texas death-match between Dr. Joe Vargas and Dr. Houston Couch to decide, once and for all, which one is right about disease management? Imagine the sponsorship possibilities...
- How many attendees will be mugged during the 2003 GCSAA show in lovely downtown Atlanta? (I was there recently and wanted to stroll over to see the Olympic Centennial Park one evening. As I was leaving the hotel, the doorman said, “You’re not actually going to walk around out there, are you?”)
- Why doesn’t Charles Barkley keep his big mouth shut about golf? Lengthening Augusta National is a racist conspiracy to keep Tiger Woods down? Yeah, right. The Round Mound of Sound needs to go to a junior event and watch these kids banging ’em past the 300-yard marker on the range. Then he’d know why Hootie and the gang at ANGC are sweating.
- What planet is Jesper Parnevik actually from?
- Will John Rocker receive a nomination in the category of Best Performance by a Redneck Jock in a Low-Budget Slasher Film for his upcoming role as a demented assistant superintendent in The Greenskeeper?

— Pat Jones is the publisher/editorial director of Golfdom. He can be reached at 440-891-3126 or pjones@advanstar.com