

HOLE NOTES

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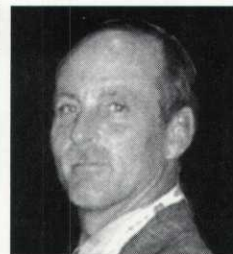
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

How We Can Deal With The Issues

By Robert Panuska



The importance of continuing education and networking has never been more critical to our jobs and the people that we work for than right now! We ALL need the support of each other to "deal" with the issues that seem to rear up each day. This may come in as questions or worse, accusations at a green committee or board meeting about the course conditions after a Minnesota winter or it may come in the form of a front page article in your local paper accusing "golf" of "killing" the environment and "wasting" natural resources. Perhaps even comments from members or patrons about your management of the course.

* * * *

Whatever the situation you find yourself, you have two choices: #1) Run and hide and pretend it didn't happen or #2) Call upon your vast experiences, your training and education and your "network" of peers to logically, professionally and calmly address the issue(s). Any of you who personally know me, know that I have a tendency to "get a bit excited" over these issues. I imagine that I am not alone and my hat is off to all the assistants and maintenance staff that "bear the brunt" of our overzealous reactions before we come back to reality and logically, professionally and calmly address the issue(s). Please take the time to read the three reprinted editorials in this issue from your peers in this association who responded very professionally to some very serious issues in their local papers. And, use them as templates for your own defense. Thank you gentlemen for representing this profession and association so well!

* * * *

On another note that is somewhat related, it seems that we are always "under the microscope" when it comes to our clientele comparing our course with another. I do need to preach to the choir on this because we all know the vast differences that exist between operations. I would like, however, to raise a challenge to each of you this year. It would seem to me that a reasonable comparison between courses might be the cost to maintain the greens on a course for a season per ,1000 square feet of green area. After all this would take into account the vast differences in construction types, fertility, disease management, cultural practices, irrigation practices and overall labor dedicated to the most important and expensive areas we maintain.

* * * *

It would take some time to break down the labor, equipment and irrigation costs but the end result would be the total cost to maintain YOUR greens at YOUR facility for a season. This number could be used to show our committees and ourselves what it takes to maintain what we have and what others spend in "comparison" so when we hear "why can't we have greens like....." We would have something of substance to evaluate our own situations. I personally do not know a superintendent out there that doesn't want to continue to improve their course and maybe this would help explain the difference? We'll see what we can come up with for a universal form that everyone could use to keep track of the costs; until then, why not keep track as best you can.

In closing this month, KUDOS to Jack MacKenzie, Hole Notes editor, and, Scott and Jeff Turtinen for their outstanding job on our publication. This new image publication is suitable to sit along side any golf industry rag I receive today!

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