

This Isn't Your Father's EPA Quent Baria, CGCS

May 1, 2006 offered a unique opportunity for area superintendents. Brian Steinwand, an ombudsman in the Office of Pesticide Programs at the EPA, and Dean Graves CGCS of Chevy Chase Club worked diligently to bring their respective groups closer during a meeting held at the University of Maryland. This marks the third meeting of these groups that gives noteworthy input into the Environmental Protection Agency's registration process.

The EPA was represented by a host of risk assessors, registration specialists, biological control specialists, and toxicologists. There were nearly forty representatives from the governmental body. The golf course superintendents were represented by Dr. Peter Dernoeden of the University of MD, as well as Carrie Riordan and Greg Lyman from the GCSAA's environmental institute for golf and Joellen Zoe from the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. Dean Graves CGCS, Rich Sweeney CGCS, and Quent Baria, CGCS represented the MAAGCS.

The program started with a tour of the University of Maryland Turfgrass research facility with a welcome from Dr. Dernoeden and an informative talk on practical benefits and most common areas of pesticide usage in the turf industry. An open forum was enjoyed, and interaction between regulators and end users ensued with surprising candor. After lunch a more formal program gave representatives from the Environmental Institute for Golf and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary an opportunity to describe the benefits and particulars of their ongoing efforts with environmental stewardship. Then the three superintendents were given time to discuss matters such as the practical benefits of being a registered Audubon Sanctuary property and daily maintenance routines and IPM that help to limit pesticide usage and any negative environmental impacts on golf courses. The GCSAA's proactive stance of disseminating information that demonstrates golf courses as net environmental enhancers has not only been heard but also believed and accepted by the EPA according to their own admission. A brief tour of the University of Maryland golf facility was made available after the education sessions.

What great news from our perspective. Another notable exchange during the proceeding was when Dr. Dernoeden was able to explain to regulators that limiting chlorothalonil usage on courses would actually add to net pesticide usage by virtue of limiting resistance management. And it seemed as if they were not only listening but also willing to continue to maintain open lines of communication with professional end users to make sure regulations make practical sense. As golf course managers, we owe special thanks to Brian Steinwand and Dean Graves CGCS for making the effort to open communications between the GCSAA and EPA on a practical level.

Paul Barefoot

The MAAGCS lost a dear old friend back in April with the death of Paul Barefoot. Paul was the Superintendent at the U.S. Soldiers and Airmans home in Washington, DC for many years and had retired to his boyhood home in Pennsylvania. He was the MAAGCS President in 1974.

Paul taught high school Agriculture in Pennsylvania and he told me a story once about coming down to the Soldiers Home to "buy a cow" or something like that and the transaction ended with an offer for him to move down and manage the property. The Soldiers Home has a commanding hilltop location in northwest Washington with extensive grounds that include the historic summer cottage of President Lincoln and a nine hole golf course. Paul lived on the property also and for many years he was the only GCSAA member listed in our Directory for Washington, DC. Paul and another longtime MAAGCS member Craig Spotswood managed a huge operation, kind of the "Physical Plant" for the home including grounds, building maintenance, pest control, and a rather large greenhouse operation. When Washington hosted the 1967 GCSAA National Conference Paul grew the flowers for a huge floral replica of the old MAAGCS logo with the capital dome. He also organized activities and bus trips for the retirees and I remember him telling me with a wink that trips to Laurel and Pimlico on the 1st and the 15th were always popular.

No one loved the MAAGCS family picnic more than Paul and his wife Jimi. For years Paul cooked ribs that were always the best and he seemingly wore the same apron for 25 years, draught beer in one hand and tongs in the other. Jimi used to play guitar and sing along with the kids and I know parents appreciated the break. Paul was also a pretty fair auctioneer and if any crabs or food were leftover it was auctioned to offset costs. I distinctly remember him getting top dollar for one of Lee Dieter's hats one year.

The MAAGCS had a Past Presidents Dinner in 2004 and it was good to see Paul. He told me he had been managing a Garden Center at WalMart and keeping busy on his property which was just a few miles from the crash site of United Flight 93 on 9-11. He also told me that he had been struggling with prostate cancer. Looking back now I'm glad the MAAGCS had that get together.

Kenneth Ingram, MG, CGCS