



From The President

What's In A Name?

Did ya ever wonder about the names of some of the pesticides that we use on our golf courses? Do you remember the good old days when chemicals really sounded dangerous? The names alone were enough to warrant a healthy respect for the toxicity of these chemicals. Compare the names of chemicals in the past (some of which are still in use today) to the more modern names:

Old Chemicals

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Toxaphene | DDT |
| Calcium Arsenate | PMAS |
| Lead Arsenate | Sodium |
| TCA | |
| Amino Triazol | Dimet |
| Potassium Cyanate | Diquat |
| Disodium Methyl Arsenate | |

New Chemicals

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| Primo | Banner |
| Pace | Subdue |
| Reward | Merit |
| Prograss | Finale |
| Gallery | Dimension |
| Acclaim | Image |

What is the use of these newer names trying to tell us? Is anything more than two or three syllables too much for us to handle? Should we feel good about using Image? Is Primo really primo? Is Finale really the final application? Is applying Reward somehow better or safer than applying Diquat?

Sometimes I get the feeling that the guys who come up with these names are the same group that came up with the idea for *New Coke*. Should we all feel safer using these great sounding chemicals? Do your members feel better when you tell them you're spraying Dimension on their fairways rather than MSMA? Maybe they do, but should they? Are people really so naive that they don't question the use of these cute sounding modern chemicals, or do the marketing people just think so? Do the lawn care companies choose to spray Merit because it sounds safer than spraying Proxol? Are their customers better served by this decision? Should a mother feel safe putting out a cute little roach motel on her kitchen floor

where her cat, or worse yet, her infant has easy access to it?

Why am I knocking the chemical industry? I'm not. Chemicals are a necessary choice as part of a well thought out pest management program. But don't think for a minute that these chemicals are risk free because they sound so wonderful. The name might lure you into a false sense of security. Nevertheless, these are still toxic pesticides and should be used and handled as such. Use them wisely, with all the caution and safety you can provide.

Now that summer is over, there are lots of events schedules for the next few months. Don't forget to sign up, and in some cases early sign up gets you a discount. Check out the calendar on the last page for more information.

Richard Lavine, CGCS
President

GCSAA — Hosts Public Relations Meeting

By Bob Costa

In early October, I traveled to Lawrence, Kansas, site of the GCSAA headquarters, to participate in two days of meetings with GCSAA staff and members of the Public Relations Committee. The meetings were scheduled to discuss the various public relations programs being considered by the Association and to critique, as well as develop new ideas for the Association's most prominent public relations effort, "Par For The Course".

For those of you who are members of GCSAA, let me begin by saying it was a great experience to be a part of the excitement at headquarters. We are currently being led by an organization that is truly committed to its membership and promoting our industry.

GCSAA public relations efforts are directed by Pat Jones, Director of Public Affairs and Scott Smith, Director of Media Relations and Video Services. The thrust of their efforts are aimed at promoting and occasionally defending the golf course maintenance industry. This is accomplished through the development of a variety of new programs. Included in our discussion were

(Continued on Page 4)

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Golf Results from October joint meeting at Sonoma Golf Club

GCSANC 23
 SNGCSAA 10

Thanks to the following two man teams for bringing the trophy home where it belongs:

Jeff Roberts Terry Grasso
 Ross Brownlie Mike Barber
 Scott Pajak Dana Cannon
 Eric Eguaras Mike Nunemacher
 Dave Davies Howard Fisher III
 Larry Norman Mitch Frasier

Thank you, Larry Norman for hosting this very successful joint meeting with our fellow superintendents from the SNGCSAA. The course was in great shape.

We would also like to thank the sponsors of the beverage carts, Scotts Proturf & Farwest Golf Course Supply for their donation to our scholarship fund.

Naumann's NorCal News

Leonard Theis has accepted the Golf Services Manager position at San Mateo G.C. He is coming from the City of Modesto where he had a similar position. Leonard is filling the position vacated by the retiree John GrantKen Williams has accepted the superintendent position at Stanford Golf Course. Ken was the superintendent at Rancho Bernardo CC in Northern San Diego County . . . Larry Feliciano has accepted the superintendent position at Yolo Fliers Club in Woodland. Larry is replacing the retiring Don Baker. Don is retiring after many years as superintendent. He is a long time member and supporter of GCSANC.



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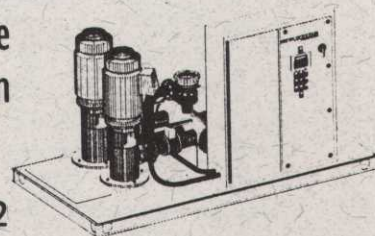
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“Strictly Business”

By Bob Costa

It's no secret that a productive maintenance staff is one of the keys to a successful maintenance operation. The benefits are not only reflected in a better maintained golf course, but also in fewer employee related headaches.

Having a productive work force becomes more critical when your operation is limited with a small staff. What's the solution? It begins with hiring competent employees, then providing the proper training and guidance so they can succeed. Sounds simple doesn't it? We've no doubt heard about it in seminars, or read about it in books on management before, but how do we make it work for us?

After years of frustrating experiences I have developed a system which I feel has worked very well at our golf courses. Here's how it works.

GCSAA — Public Relations (Cont'd)

By: Bob Costa

comments on the development of environmental principles for golf courses in the U.S., professional image and titles, Audubon Schools, a new slogan for the Association, corporate sponsorship of events and "Par For The Course."

Many ideas were exchanged by the committee whose members geographically represent the membership. The consensus amongst the group was that we are pleased by the direction and efforts being made through the various programs, however, one thing is very clear. In order for any of these programs to succeed they must be embraced and supported by the membership.

Begin by making a list of the qualities you expect from your employees. For me it's: **Communication Skills** - How can we train our employees, and set performance goals if we can't communicate? **Reliability/dependability** - Employees are of no value if they're not at work, or not on time. **Have pride in their performance** - All of what we do is visual, employees who care about quality are essential. **Motivation** - There's always more work than there is time. Employees who aren't productive are a handicap.

Once you know what it is you want, it's time to go find it. Take interviewing seriously. Develop a list of questions that helps you determine whether an employee has these qualities, and don't hesitate to mention, up front, that you demand these qualities from your staff. Check references and never hire an individual after the first meeting.

Bring them back several days later for a more informal interview on the golf course. You'd be surprised what you might learn. Lastly, don't be swayed with someone's golf course or maintenance experience, unless this is one of the conditions you have established for hire. Maintenance skills can be taught, character can't. I've never seen a supervisor who has been able to teach an employee pride.

Once you have reached a decision and hired an individual, the next step is to provide sufficient training. To be truly effective, training should occur prior to an employee setting foot on the golf course. One of the biggest pitfalls of on the job training is it never gets done, or it gets done poorly. Here is some information you should consider including in a new hire training program: a job description, a

policy, safety and procedural handbook specific for the maintenance department, safety training and equipment operation videos, and a tour of the golf course and maintenance facility.

Most training programs fail because they are rushed, and poorly organized. Try using videos, written materials and a checklist that outlines the training program to help make the training more efficient, freeing you up, so you can fulfill the other requirements of your day.

As an employee is transitioning into his, or her job, they are naturally curious about their performance. Take this opportunity to communicate with them regularly, and provide constructive feedback. This is your chance to reinforce good performance and correct bad habits before they become chronic. I have found that a

(Continued on Page 6, Col. 3)

The role of GCSAA is to develop the programs and provide the resources for public relations efforts. It is our responsibility as members to get involved at the grass roots level and make a difference.

One of the most exciting activities during the meeting was the opportunity to participate in the planning of "Par For The Course". For those of you who have never seen it, it can be described in one word — **impressive**. For an Association of our size (15,000) it's quite a feat to have a weekly television show on a major network. The biggest complaint, justifiably so, is the 4:30 a.m. west coast time slot on Sunday morning. Unfortunately ESPN calls the

shots on this one, however, in 1996 episodes will also be shown on ESPN 2 Wednesday nights at 10:00 p.m.

Although it is certainly a show we should want to watch, the target audience are golfers, and an occasional non-golfer. One excellent suggestion was to tape several episodes and show them in the pro shop throughout the day. Just think of the audience you could capture while the golfers are waiting out a frost delay.

The show format is designed to encompass all aspects of golf, including features on environmental projects and maintenance practices, its message is simple, promote and add exposure to golf course superin-

tendents. Commit to helping make it happen.

If I could summarize my feelings as I returned home, it is that we are being led at the national level by bright, dedicated individuals who truly have the best interests of superintendents at heart. The low road would be to sit back and follow their lead, let them fight the battles while we lose the war. I challenge each of you to find a way in which you can raise the image of golf course superintendents just one notch. Take advantage of the opportunities and resources which are available and travel the high road. Make a difference. ♦

USGA

"Nobody Wants To Go Where I Want To Lead Them"

By Pat Gross, Agronomist

It's difficult to be a leader and always do the right thing. When it comes to golf course maintenance, there has been a clear message from the public that they are concerned about water use on golf courses, personal exposure to pesticides and the fate of pesticides in the environment, and the effects of golf course maintenance activities on wildlife. The response by the golf industry has been to conduct research in many areas, which resulted in the development of drought tolerant grasses, integrated pest management strategies, low-impact pest control products, and a program to enhance wildlife habitat on golf courses - the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. The response by golfers has been surprising; many are unwilling to change if it means the grass will not always be brilliant green, or the putting surfaces 2" slower, or if it will cause green fees to go up 50¢! As

a result, superintendents are sometimes caught in a vicious cycle of keeping grass alive by over watering and frequent pesticide applications for fear of losing their job even though they know it may not be the right thing to do.

As a leader, the superintendent has an obligation to educate their golfers and management, but what can you do if nobody wants to go where you want to lead them? Keeping in mind that it is their club and you are only an employee, it is still your responsibility to point out liabilities and opportunities for improvement. A good starting point is to make the club management aware of the weak areas in the maintenance operation while offering your plans and recommendations for improvement. There is no need to forcefully demand that things be done immediately, but rather demonstrate your willingness to take a leadership role to improve the maintenance

operation. Here are a few suggested projects and practices to accomplish this goal:

- Conduct an environmental audit of the golf course and maintenance facility. Are pesticides stored safely? Where does rinse water go after cleaning of equipment and sprayers? Is application equipment in good working condition? Are training records up to date? Is there a large stockpile of old pesticides in the storage shed? Document these conditions and review them with the club management. Be ready with a list of solutions and a budget for any necessary improvements. They may not be ready to move forward right away, but at least you have a record of what needs to be done and a plan to get there.
- Make an effort to try new grasses on your golf course. Establish test plots in your nursery or in an out of play area of

(Continued on page 7)

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NorCal Sierra Nevada Meeting A Success

On a day whose dark clouds brought the news of Steve Young's shoulder injury and was punctuated by the Raiders humiliation on Monday Night Football, the silver lining proved to be the success of the NorCal Sierra Nevada joint meeting, hosted by Sonoma Golf Club. Attendees at this year's event, which numbered over 150, experienced an informative talk from GCSAA's Scott Smith, a tasty south of the border lunch, and a great afternoon of golf.

Smith, director of Media Relations and Video Services, discussed the need to improve the image of golf course superintendents and highlighted several programs GCSAA has developed to assist superintendents. He pointed out that perception is the key to image development and therefore, superintendents must utilize every opportunity to project a professional image. He praised superintendents for the job that we do, particularly as it relates to environmental management. Our short-coming, Smith stated, has been our failure to effectively tell our story, which has manifested itself in our lack of recognition

He urged superintendents to actively participate in public relations efforts, noting that the success of the GCSAA's public relations campaign relies heavily upon its members. Smith cited several examples of how each of us could enhance our image. His ideas were as fundamental as being more conscious of how we dress, to enrollment in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

Smith's presentation concluded with a viewing of a promo tape featuring "Par For The Course". To increase viewership, the 1996 schedule includes telecasts every Sunday, March through November, and a rebroadcast on ESPN 2, Wednesdays at 10:00 p.m. The show was created to increase the exposure of golf course superintendents and highlight environmental projects. Thus far, it has been a success on both counts.

A classic fall day greeted those who took part in the afternoon shotgun. On behalf of all of those who participated, we thank Larry Norman, his staff, and the entire staff at Sonoma Golf Club for hosting a very successful event. A final word of thanks is

due to Ross Brownlie of Farwest Supply and Chuck Dal Pozzo from O.M. Scotts for hosting the beverage carts. All proceeds were donated to the scholarship fund. ♦

Strictly Business (Cont'd)

formal evaluation scheduled after 90 days, and 6 months during the first year, helps to guide an employee, provides a vehicle to set performance goals, and demonstrates your interest in their performance.

One last bit of advice that has made a big difference in our operations. Consider hiring permanent part time employees. Our philosophy has been to hire quality, competent part time staff that can be groomed and trained for an eventual full-time position. This approach has allowed us to fill, full time positions, with employees who are trained, and with whom we have had a chance to evaluate over a period of time. They benefit, from the opportunity to be promoted into a full time position, and we benefit by improving the quality and productivity of our full time staff. ♦

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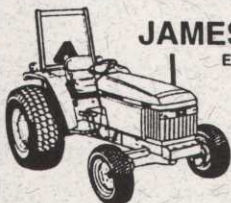
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Nobody Wants To Go . . . (Cont'd.)

the rough. Take the green committee out to look at the new grasses on the course or at local conferences and university field days.

Try to reduce pesticide use through better scouting, cultural management programs, and integrated pest management techniques. If your club is reluctant to try these methods, ask them to allow you to leave untreated check plots on one or two greens when applying preventive fungicides or herbicides, or implement a strong IPM program on three or four holes as a pilot program.

Take part in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses. It's really embarrassing that this program has been around for nearly four years and there are less than ten courses fully certified in the West (only two in California). This is a great leadership opportunity for superintendents and I haven't heard a good reason yet for not participating. It's a win-win-

win situation for the club, the community, and wildlife.

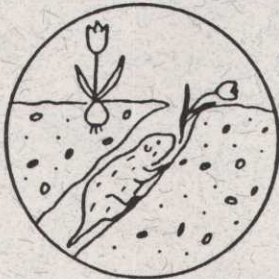
- Support turfgrass and environmental research for golf courses on a local and national level. The industry has made great strides in the past ten years, but there is much work yet to be done. Support them so they can support you.
- Make sure people know what you are doing. After all, if you don't bang the drum how is anyone going to know there is a parade? Take photographs of all your projects on the golf course. When you are checking the greens, take the opportunity to talk with the golfers and show them what you are doing. Also, make sure your staff is well informed so they can answer simple questions from golfers.

Even if people don't want to follow your lead, forge ahead with good planning, persistence, public relations, and patience. Remember that change is often slow to occur, but it is inevitable. ❖

GCSAA Chapter Cooperative Research Program

The GCSAA is requesting proposals from local chapters for funding research programs on a local level. Our chapter, through our contribution to the Platinum Tee Club with the CGCSA qualifies to compete for matching funds of up to \$10,000 per year for three years. **We need your suggestions for projects that you feel are necessary and worthy of funding by our next board meeting on November 14. Please contact any board member with your suggestions.** This is an excellent benefit that GCSAA offers to local chapters to increase the effectiveness of their research Dollars. For more information on the Chapter Cooperative Research Program, check out the July 1995 issue of *Golf Course Management* for further details..

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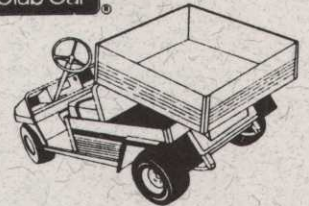
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