

All's fair in love and water

Editorial License



Tom Benefield, CGCS
Editor

It is interesting to watch the circus atmosphere around the Everglades Pollution cleanup resolution. All of the concerned parties have been working for several years to come to an agreement on the cost of sharing of cleaning the water from the farming operations in the 'Glades. These parties thought they had a solution in which both the farming and public sectors paid their fair shares.

However, along comes this coalition of quasi-environmentalists who have launched a petition drive to have the farming industry pay all of the cleanup costs. They hope to do this by imposing a penny-per-pound tax on sugar produced in the 'Glades. They feel that the farming industry is the only source of pollution in the glades and thus should be responsible for the cost of the entire cleanup program. They are wrong, of course, but then again truth never has been one of the strong points of the enviro-terrorists.

One of the ringleaders of this coalition is a land developer from Orange County. He is one of those self-righteous environmentalists... you know, the ones who tell you to do as they say, not as they do.

I have to believe that somewhere

along the lines, he has created his share of environmental damage. Taking virgin land and bulldozing all the vegetation, grading, asphaltting and covering it up with concrete is probably not the most environmentally positive use of the land. From a water recharge and water quality viewpoint, his kind of development probably would not win any awards either, not even from his coalition buddies.

But such things matter little to the "environmental coalition." They have their holy war to fight over the glades cleanup and they don't care who joins their side as long as they bring money with them. They certainly don't seem to have a problem bending and twisting their ethics to suit their agendas. They are eager to lash out at agriculture because it is an easy target, not unlike our own industry. Soon they will turn more of their attention to us, as other targets become part of their coalition.

While this coalition is up and running hard with its petition drive "for the good of all" the people in this state, perhaps they should start another petition drive. Maybe the self-righteous citizens of Florida should march under the banner of justice and launch a petition drive to impose a state tax of \$1 per thousand gallons on potable water.

This tax would be placed on every public and private water utility service. The money could be used to clean up the polluted water running out of the concrete jungles in this state. You know, the water which is destroying our lakes,

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Noble causes not always politically correct

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streams and estuaries such as Lake Worth. They say that prior to concrete jungles appearing, Lake Worth was teeming with wildlife and fish. Today it is teeming with motorboats and jet skis and any fish left are unsafe to eat.

Surely this is as noble a cause as the Everglades. Part of the money could be used to properly dispose of the hazardous wastewater generated by the people living in these concrete jungles. Their waste today is dumped offshore only to be found later on the reefs of Florida Bay or washing onto the beaches from Miami to Jacksonville.

Yes this indeed would be a noble cause but not a politically correct

one. You see these “environmentalists” survive and increase in numbers because they know when to be moral and ethical for a just cause and when to keep their mouths shut. There is not the first one amongst them that has the moral fiber and backbone to wage war on the worst of all polluters in this state: the general public. And this is sad. Here we have a state that is going to hell in a handbasket because of a bulging population and the problems it brings while the defenders of the forest sit quietly on their arrows with their heads buried in the sand.

Why is this? Quite simple. To place blame on the general public would be placing blame on

themselves. Placing a tax on John Q. Public would be taxing themselves. As mentioned before, their morals and ethics are like trees in the wind, bending and twisting this way and that so long as their agendas are obtained.

Their next agenda?

We — the golf industry — are on the bubble. Our water rights are not only being questioned but also assaulted by these self-selected saviours of the planet. Prepare yourself for the fight ahead; it will come soon and they will be prepared — but not with truth or logic. If either of those qualities mattered to these people, you’d see that \$1 tax on the concrete jungles.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Please send an application...

Dear Tom:

In your spring issue of *The Florida Green* you had included a picture of a fallen seawall from your golf course. I then called you in mid May thinking it was a picture of our fallen seawall at Tiger Point. I just thought I would send you a copy of our seawall just to show you that you are not alone.

Your article that was with the picture was great. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Please send me an application to join your association. Thank you for your attention. I just thought you might enjoy the pictures.

Sincerely,

John P. Kennedy

Golf Course Superintendent
Tiger Point Golf and Country Club

In defense of contractors...

Dear Tom Benefield,

Your contributions to the Florida Golf

Course Superintendents Association are greatly appreciated by your fellow superintendents. However, we take exception to your recent editorial comments concerning the use of maintenance contractors for the golf course. We do not believe an average member could ever begin to handle the task of contracting a professional contractor. We have been trained to know how to do an effective job in these areas and we would readily recognize if the contractor indeed was professional.

Many golf courses can neither afford the use of the man hours or the equipment that is necessary to perform some of the maintenance practices that you refer to in your editorial. We do not care for your chastisement upon the superintendent profession. Item 9. in our GC-SAA Code of Ethics states that we are to “Abstain from debasement of, or encroachment upon, the professional reputation, practice or employment of an-

other superintendent.”

Our club presidents, greens chairmen, club owners, and general managers are readers of *The Florida Green*. It is very possible that the aforementioned individuals could see your remarks in the editorial and question the management abilities of their superintendent.

We should also recognize the importance of these contractors. Not only do they provide a necessary service but many are supporters of the superintendent associations.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors,
Everglades GCSA

Editor’s comment: *The article was not meant to chastise anyone, either superintendent or contractor. Rather it illustrates a disturbing trend in the management of golf courses which will one day become counterproductive to the profession of the golf course manager.*