

Reasons to feel optimistic about our industry

About a year ago I was pretty depressed about the state of our industry, what with people like Paul Harvey riding the airwaves and Carol Browner riding herd over EPA. Though I'd be first to warn against too much optimism, since it often leads to complacency, I do think we have plenty of reasons

to feel better about the future of the golf industry, independent of recent political changes.

The most encouraging of the past year's developments include the ongoing changes in GCSAA; the risk assessment legislation; the recent environmental summit in California; significant new developments in organics and biotechnology; the DNA research on bermudagrass soon to be started; the FTGA's turfgrass certification program; the continued growth of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program; and the continued growth, interest, and professionalism of the superintendent associations around the state.

A good example of the latter was the Spring Turfgrass Seminar put on by the Everglades GCSA this past March 10.

This was a real blockbuster of an educational program, featuring such noted speakers as Dr. Joe Duich, Dr. Jim Watson, Dr. Al Dudeck, Dr. Charles Throssell, Ron Dodson, and Shelly Foy. Recently elected President of GCSAA, Gary Grigg, also was there to give an update on the many good things going on with our national association.

Mike Mongoven has covered the highlights of the seminar in the News Section of this issue. As moderator of the event, I have a few additional comments on the speakers presentations:

◆ **Shelly Foy** - Taking the ACSP message to the schools will help educate our kids who are being brainwashed by Captain Planet, Ranger Rick, and other eco-nonsense. Hats off to the Everglades Chapter for their commitment of seminar funds to help this effort.

◆ **Ron Dodson** - Ron hopes to see golf thought of one day as "the conservation arm of the free enterprise system." He wants golf to lead the way for the involvement of schools, businesses, and local communities in the

ACSP. It doesn't take a genius to figure out that if we grasp this opportunity, it must surely lead to a reversal of our poor environmental image in the minds of the public.

◆ **Dr. Al Dudeck** - He also shared his findings on "FloraDwarf," the selection he brought back from Hawaii a few years ago and has been evaluating ever since as a potential putting green quality turfgrass. FloraDwarf has received its patent and is beginning the process for certification.

Dr. Dudeck hasn't yet published a technical bulletin on this selection, but the grass has a lot of potential based on the data he presented.

"FloraDwarf" retained its color much better than "Tifdwarf" in Gainesville throughout the winter; it produces only about half the top growth; has shorter internodes; and gives a greater ball speed on the stimpmeter. On the negative side, sting nematodes seem to love it; it produces a lot of thatch in a short period of time; and it is difficult to overseed into with perennial rye (*Poa trivialis* was better; bentgrass not yet tested).

Thatch control is better achieved with light frequent topdressings than with verticutting, due to the severe loss of turf quality following verticutting. All of Dr. Dudeck's data is based on plots maintained at 3/16-inch, mowed Monday through Friday.

Some superintendents perceive Dr. Dudeck's refusal to evaluate at lower heights as stubbornness and not responsive to industry's needs. I suggest, however, that you give him credit for trying to help all superintendents.

I think it is up to us to evaluate the limits of cutting heights of this grass on our own plots in Fort Lauderdale and on our own golf courses. I think Dr. Dudeck understands the "real" world better than some of us, realizing the danger of publishing claims that green committee chairmen can use to hang their superintendents.

◆ **Dr. Clark Throssell** - He believes acid injection systems are not helpful for salinity problems, but probably very helpful for high bicarbonate problems. It had also slipped my mind that Dr. Throssell was one of Dr. Duich's students, and had participated in Joe's green speed research as a graduate student.

◆ **Dr. Joe Duich** - Though his green speed talk was similar to one I had heard him give a couple of years ago, it was great to see and hear a man who has given so much to our industry. Of course, the talk was updated and embellished with recent stories of his stimping duties at the Masters, and I must admit, I had forgotten that Wiehle rollers were so much worse than solid rollers on the

Mark My Words



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cleanup pass around greens. I wish I had the space to chronicle Dr. Duich's contributions to our industry for the younger members of our association, because everyone of us has benefited from his work, and owe him our gratitude.

◆ **Dr. James Watson** - Another giant in our industry, and this year's winner of GCSAA's "Old Tom Morris Award." He echoed the need for the golf industry to take their environmental story to the public. He cited GCSAA's superintendent promotional efforts (*Par For The Course* on ESPN), and Ron Dodson's ACSP program as effective ways of doing this.

This was a super program, and the Everglades group did a great job putting it together. My thanks to Wayne Kappauf, Dale Walters, and the rest of the Everglades Chapter for the privilege of serving as moderator, and to Wendy Hamilton for her many courtesies (Wendy is the new Executive Director of the EGSCA).

Returning to the theme of this article, I think we have every right to feel good about the direction our industry is headed, thanks to the talents and dedication of people like those mentioned above. Let's just not get complacent and slack off when there is still so much to do!

Death Lurks in the Sunshine

from Page 85

After all, I was merely a meddlesome wife. Real men don't need sissy sunscreen. They're tough. They're invincible. They're too busy. It's too hot and greasy — a million excuses. But you know what, guys? Real men do wear sunscreen — at least those who love their wives and children and staying alive. Tim is 36 years old. He's young, he's strong, he's incredibly intelligent — and he could have died. But for the grace of God...

Please, if not for yourselves, then for your loved ones, use protection. Wear a panama-style hat and sunblock every day, be it sunny or cloudy. You don't want your wife going through the soul-shattering agony of losing you.

Years ago in *The Florida Green*, I concluded an article about life at Lake City Community College by describing our marriage as "scarred, tested, strong." I didn't know then what those words truly meant. Now I do. I feel closer to my husband than I did on our wedding day. His being here is the greatest gift from God in my life. Every day I will thank God for this precious second chance with my husband.

The sun is not your friend. It may be great for your greens, but if you're not there to tend them, don't fool yourselves — another superintendent will take your place at work. But another husband and father can never fill your shoes at home. Take Dr. Copeland's advice to heart, and may God bless you all with a life free from the terrifying and possibly fatal disease of skin cancer.

Editor's Note: Recently Tim had another scare when he found some swollen lymph glands. Thankfully, examination determined that it was not a return of the cancer. I want to thank Cheryl and Tim for sharing their story of one of the real dangers of being a superintendent and the impact it can have on the lives of our families. Everyone, take care of yourselves out there!

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The precise nature of professionalism is sometimes difficult to get a handle

on. So, I set out to find someone who saw things honestly and clearly.

Someone who could put his finger on the very essence of professionalism, because he distilled daily life into its simplest truths. I found such a man at his brand new golf

club that he built from the profits of his seafood company. He called the club, The Forrest. And this is what he had to say:

“My Momma told me professionalism is like a box of chocolate-covered cherries. You should know what you’re going to get just about every time.”

But you know what? Everybody makes mistakes. Sometimes they make a mistake at the candy factory and the candy doesn’t always come out the same. Some have more filling. Or, sometimes the cherry is missing! But mostly if you buy chocolate-covered cherries, that’s what you get.

One time a man calling himself a professional tried to sell me a box of

candy he said was chocolate-covered cherries, but they wasn’t. They was chocolate-covered raisins. He tried to cheat me! Momma said there are people like that. She told me that I should never call those kind of people professionals.

Momma says you can tell a professional by the way he acts. He tells the truth. He admits mistakes and he fixes them. He’s nice to the people he works for and to the people who work for him. And if they’re professional, too, they’ll be nice back. He doesn’t break rules and never tries to steal another man’s job.

I could never trust a person who stole another man’s job. I would wonder what else he would steal from me if he worked for me? And you know what? People shouldn’t ask a man to take another man’s job without telling everybody about it first. That way everybody can help each other make changes.

I could really respect and trust people like that. Maybe they don’t care about me trusting them, but you know what? I bet they end up hiring people like the man who tried to sell me those chocolate-covered raisins.

I guess that’s why Momma always said, “Professionalism is as professionalism does.”

*Professionalism
is as
professionalism
does*

**Green
Side Up**



Joel D. Jackson

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