

*Mother nature
throws many
curve balls*

As we start a new year and some of us look forward to going out to San Francisco for the GCSAA Conference and Show to attend classes and to see the trade show, I look back at 1994 and one word comes to mind: perseverance.

Statewide the rains fell all summer and fall. Some folks got more than their share and most of us had well above normal amounts. Of course the timing of Tropical Storm

Gordon was perfect, arriving right in time for the start of the Florida golf season. Many of us on the East Coast had rainfall amounts that exceeded one foot from the storm. The bad news is that my golf course had areas, that I had never seen hold water before, flood and then take days to drain or evaporate. Of course the turf in these areas thinned out and as Murphy's Law would have it, the winter growth slowdown was rapidly approaching. The good news is not real good but it is that we are all experiencing the same problems that have resulted from the rains.

The golf course superintendents that I know will PERSEVERE through these tough times and help out fellow superintendents who are also battling these problems. I think that we all need to reflect and remind ourselves of the great industry that we are all fortunate to be involved with. In spite

of the weather that makes all of our jobs interesting, managing such a large tract of land, to such a high degree that we do, is truly an awesome task and one that is very gratifying. Helping to improve wildlife habitat and doing an environmentally responsible job while offering great golf conditions is something that we should all be very proud of. Mother nature throws many curve balls during a year, from tropical storms and hurricanes to unusual cold to wind, lightning and heavy rain. After she is done, we clean up the mess and continue on.

Everyone has their own reason or reasons for playing golf. As a matter of fact, I think that some people play golf, while others actually live golf. Some play golf solely for the competitive or athletic aspect. Others play as a form of relaxation and a way to commune with nature. Still others enjoy the social aspect of the game and their club. Those that I feel who live golf may actually live on a course, play many times per week and enjoy the social aspect of the game and their club. We are the main link who tie golf together. Without a properly managed golf course, the game and all the different facets of it would not be the same.

The next time that the weather treats you bad or when things are stressful and you are ready to give up, think of your job and the industry and your fellow golf course managers. Look at the big picture and appreciate your profession and all that it has given to you. 🏌️

**President's
Message**



Scott Bell, CGCS
President, FGCSA

I hope that all of you had a wonderful and safe holiday season. After living in Florida for the past eight years, I still find it somewhat strange to celebrate the holidays without cold weather and some snow, but somebody has to do it and it might as well be me.

This past year was a very positive one for the FGCSA. We have seen an increase in

our research dollars due to some hard-nosed fund raising efforts. This gives the FGCSA an opportunity to actively participate in and support programs and projects important to the well being of the game of golf. We have also seen a bringing together of Dr. Nell's talented staff at the University of Florida to help solve the turf identity problems that we are now facing. Finally, we have seen the release of the all-important turf survey by the

Florida Turfgrass Association that shows just how valuable our industry is to the economy of Florida. With 1994 behind us and its successes still in view, we must now move on and try to be even more constructive in 1995.


A large obstacle that continues to potentially threaten our well-manicured golf courses is a lack of water or the threats of a lack of water. Our industry is looked upon by many as a water-waster and this image must change. The FGCSA must stand united behind the benefits of turfgrasses and continue to demonstrate to those concerned that golf courses are NOT wasting this valuable resource.

I actively attend water conservation meetings in the Tampa area and am appalled at the misconceptions that other

segments of the green industry have about turfgrass. Their biggest complaints are that turfgrasses use tremendous amounts of water and that it costs "mucho dinero" to maintain it. How can it be?! I actually sat in on a meeting where several individuals wanted to establish within an ordinance a limit on the amount of turfgrass that can be used in a landscape setting. If it's not grass, what will it be — concrete?! One can only have so many trees and shrubs.

Many of you have heard me talk about this important issue before and I sure hope you are listening to me now. Other segments of the green industry have consistent representation at these meetings and are aligned on their needs when it comes to water use and have proposed their own methods of water conservation. The turfgrass industry must do the same and do it now. The issues of water use on turfgrasses must be attacked before new laws are mandated and we find ourselves wondering what happened.

For those of you who have water use permits, take the time to review the permit and if you foresee any problems with your existing permit, start working on them now, not when it comes time for renewal. Changes in the permitting process are occurring and for some of us it will not be for the better. For those of you who are on effluent systems, your wake-up call is coming sooner that you would like it to. Better take a look at your contract because a new source of revenue has been found and guess what... it's your effluent water!

Water use on golf courses is going to be a hot topic in 1995 and the FGCSA as an association should be ready to justify our needs as an industry and be able to educate those "decision-makers" about our needs when the time comes. A state-wide effort is needed — let's all work together! 

Water use is the hot topic for 1995

Plotner's Page



Greg Plotner, CGCS Publications Chairman