

We Don't Say 'Thank You' Often Enough

By Don Benham

I received an E-mail the other day about thanking people with an E-mail. It was suggested I send a personal note to individuals acknowledging something about them I like. You know the kind of E-mail I mean. The touchy-feely ones suggesting I send the message to ten people. I never do even though most of them are just harmless pass-along-the-story type of mail.

For some reason several days after I had deleted the E-mail it was still on my mind.

Benham's Beat



My wife and I had dinner last evening with several old friends, "old" meaning I have known them for more than years.

One couple volunteers at Sarasota Memorial Hospital three days a week and has been doing this for 10 years. Thinking of the E-mail, I thanked them for contributing their time for a common good. It made me feel good for thanking them even though I have never been a patient in that hospital.

We all know somebody in our business who contributes personal time to help golf. He or she might be your local chapter secretary or treasurer or one of the other board members who spends a lot of time on chapter business. They might be in charge of securing speakers for the monthly meetings, keeping the check-book balances, producing a newsletter, or maintaining a Web site.

I was at the Suncoast Chapter meeting for the annual election at Sara Bay Country Club. There were several reports given of Chapter interest just as at every other chapter meeting going on across the state. I have been attending chapter meetings for 30 years with people volunteering their time for the benefit of the whole group. I have thanked a lot of people over those years but I also have taken for granted and not thanked many others.

At this Suncoast meeting one of the speakers was from Sarasota County and he brought along copies of the working draft of a new regulation entitled "Sarasota County Golf Course Design and Performance Standards." My first thought was that I had better send a copy of this to Joel Jackson.

Joel had sent out a memo March 22 suggesting - and I quote - "We can't emphasize

enough how beneficial it can be for your chapter to host a monthly meeting where you invite local legislators to attend and give you, the voters in their district, a legislative update. Such meetings provide you with the opportunity to discuss the regulatory issues facing golf in your district."

It should not be a gripe session but it can be an educational exchange, beneficial to both parties. This working draft turns over a lot of control and reporting to the county. I know it is being written in a positive manner but it is very far-reaching in taking control of golf courses in the county.

I asked the question, "What prompted the writing of this ordinance?" I was told that when new golf courses were being built, people were concerned about safety and possible chemical runoff into water supplies. This ordinance has a detailed section on "Existing Golf Courses."

This is exactly what Joel has been warning us about. Thank you, Joel Jackson, for all of the extra time you spend in meetings and collecting information for us. You go far beyond your job. It's time I said this thank you to you, the same as I did to the couple volunteering at the hospital. I have a lot more thank-yours to be said and I am going to make sure that I say them in the future.

"Editor's Note: You're welcome, Don, and thanks for the "atta-boy," but give credit to the Suncoast GCSA and especially the Suncoast Owners Association. Thanks to their involvement in the process it looks like the stringent "Existing Course" section may be removed after both groups had presented real world facts to the County. This is a good example of why owners need to be more united and involved in Florida's golf industry."

USGA Update BMPs Suggested for Golf Course Water Coolers

by David L. Wienecke

Golf course water coolers have been in the news after an Arizona golf course was found liable for contaminated drinking water resulting in a death. The following points outline some best management practices aimed at reducing potential potable drinking water contamination on the golf course. Additional information is available at the Cactus and Pine Golf Course Superintendent's Association Web site at www.cactusandpine.com.

Water and Ice:

Arizona golf courses now have padlocked containers to secure water quality in any coolers placed on the golf course. To avoid the potential for contamination, ice also should be in a locked container unless it is a dispenser-type ice machine. Water and ice in the cooler must be from a public-water distribution system or approved water supply that is tested to ensure conformity with applicable regulations. Check with your county or state health department to verify that your water source meets applicable regulations for potable water.

Water Dispensers:

If using a cooler, it should be made from food-grade materials and be easily cleaned. The cooler spigot should be a gravity-flow design to minimize contamination.

The Maricopa County Environmental Services Department recommends cleaning water cooler dispensers every 24 hours.

Recommended cleaning procedures include washing with a detergent, rinsing with clean potable water, followed by an approved sanitizer such as chlorine bleach immersed for at least one minute.

Contact your health department for recommended bleach dilution rates for sanitizing.

The sink used for cleaning ideally must be large enough to allow complete immersion of the cooler. If this is not possible, a cleaning and sanitizing in-place procedure has been approved by on-site inspectors.

The dispenser nozzle also must be cleaned prior to filling containers.

Cleaning procedure recommendations also include air drying of the container. Containers should never be in contact with the floor.

Arizona golf courses are being inspected by the environmental services or health departments to ensure proper cleaning and sanitizing is being done for water cooler dispensers.

Some Arizona golf courses have chosen to stop using water coolers and have installed refrigerated drinking fountains equipped with single-service paper cups. If this is done, make certain a licensed plumber installs the machine to ensure compliance with all appropriate plumbing codes. Compliance with all applicable vending machine regulations also is required. Machines installed must be National Sanitation Foundation Underwriters Laboratory and National Automatic Merchandising Association approved. These approvals (i.e. "NAMA Listed" service mark) are found in the upper left hand corner on the front of the machine. In addition, machines in compliance with these standards will have a letter of compliance listing the manufacture, model, and date of certification that the vendor should be able to show the purchaser.

The machine must be protected from contact with irrigation system sprinkler water.

The golf course is required to sample the water dispensed from this machine at least once every 12 months to detect coliform bacteria.