

By Greg Pheneger

Golf course superintendents from around the world will soon be descending upon San Diego in early February. In my previous classes, I sat next to superintendents from all over the globe and have learned to respect just how good I have it only traveling a few hours to get to the conference site. Sure, I'll whine about the flight to San Diego just like I will complain about the drive to Orlando next year.

The last time the show was in Orlando, I met a superintendent from Australia. He didn't complain once about his plane ride from half a world away; he just kept going on and on about the experience and enormous size and attendance of the show.

I go to the convention for the convention itself, not because it is held in a particular city. I can't tell you anything about the tourist sights of Atlanta after last year's visit. The hotel resembled any other hotel. The seminars and trade show, reconnecting old friends and meeting new ones take up most of my day. The education is the reason to plan the trip, so don't let the venue detour your focus. I hope to see all of you in San Diego at the FGCSA Reception Feb. 12 in the Wyndham Hotel at Emerald Plaza.

Locally, seven Florida Turfgrass Association Regional Turf Conferences are being held at various locations around the state. The topics will include herbicide updates, adjuvant and tank mixing, ground-water, and pesticides... and more. All of these are very important topics and the cost is minimal. With all the opportunities available around the state, make an attempt to attend one of the conferences, and if you can't make it, send

someone else who needs to be in the know.

I recently took the Core Turf and Ornamental exam and the instructor briefly discussed the new pesticide license requirements coming up in 2005. (Yes, I did not have enough credits). Yes, I know that 2005 is still a year away; however, if your license requires renewing in January 2005, you must meet these new requirements. So, plan ahead and research the exact requirements at www.safepesticideuse.com and you will not have to spend all day taking the test. (By the way, I did pass the exam). I have written about the arsenic issue in previous arti-

cles and the need to be prepared for inquiries from media representatives. Please stay on top of this issue to make certain that the golf industry does not get painted as the bad guy. Remember, we are using a legal chemical and we are applying the product in a legal manner at labeled rates.

The arsenic issue will be with us for awhile. I realize everyone has a very busy schedule this time of year and it is understandable to think that, if it has not affected you yet, it will never impact you. However, all of us are only a phone call away from your local media outlet. So be prepared and discuss the issues at your next board and chapter meetings. Don't assume that everyone already is aware of the issues and ramifications of arsenic. A close friend in the industry always reminds me what "assume" stands for.

My sincere condolences to Terri Bundschu, whose husband Paul passed away recently. Paul owned Harvest Publishing, which has been the publisher of the Florida Turf Digest for many years. Paul not only was a contractor providing publishing services for the FTGA, but he volunteered his time and efforts to the turf industry. Another friend of our turfgrass industry has passed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Bundschu family.

I apologize for not having the opportunity as to visit many chapters around the state this year. Like most of you, I've

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had a very busy schedule and also had back surgery recently, which has prevented me from traveling pre and post surgery. I have plans to visit as many of the chapters as possible during the first few months of the New Year to meet with as many of you as possible.

Take care and I hope all of you had a safe and wonderful holiday season.

Don't Take Education and Issues For Granted

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greg Pheneger