

THE QUARTERLY QUESTION

Aerifying and Verticutting Rank Most Valuable

What is the most important or beneficial tool, equipment, product or service used at your course? You can waffle and name two if they are really important to your operation. Briefly tell why?

MATT TAYLOR, ROYAL POINCIANA GOLF CLUB, NAPLES

Triplex verticutters and groomers — without them we could not control the mat (thatch) on the greens, everything in my opinion plays off of how much mat you have. And that affects: trueness of ball roll, speed of the greens and quality of cut with greens mowers.

GREG KRIESCH, HERITAGE PALMS GOLF CLUB, FT. MYERS

My employees are the most important and beneficial tool I have (most of the time). I would be nowhere without them. The aerifier would be second; with as many rounds as our course receives, I could use at least six.

STEPHEN FOX, OCEAN REEF GOLF CLUB, KEY LARGO

I think I would have to say it would be my greens aerifiers and verticut reels. I experience heavy play during season and of course this is the time that the membership doesn't want you touching the greens. Once season comes to an end, I try to and impact 30 percent of the surface through

aerification each summer. This, along with verticuts and topdressing every two weeks during summer, gets us where we want for season. With the new ultradwarfs you better have the aerifiers and verticuts ready to go. It almost doesn't seem like you can impact them enough sometimes.

FRANK E. SBARRO, LA GORCE GOLF CLUB, MIAMI BEACH

Solid-tine aerators for the greens. I use the 1/4-in. tines every three weeks from November through April. By allowing water to better infiltrate the TifEagle, a big difference in the turf quality of greens was noticed throughout the winter season. We also just purchased a 350 KW generator for our pump station. *(No doubt prompted by hurricane season – Editor).*

SHANE BASS, ST. JAMES BAY GOLF CLUB, CARRABELLE

Right now I would have to say my Blackberry because it keeps me from sitting in the office. All my financial statements from the main office come to it. I am answering your e-mail on No. 2 green right now on it. I can fax from it. I have unlimited Internet on it so that means I have weather and radar anywhere anytime. My calendar is on it and when I get it so I can turn on irrigation from it, I'll have the office on my cart.

**One Adam
Twelve,
See the man...**



AS IT LIES

**By
JIM WALKER**

I enjoy being involved with my local chapter's board and the state association as well, but it has always been the dinners afterward at our local meetings that I enjoy the most. It's great sitting around in an informal situation and talking to my colleagues.

We talk about shared problems and others that are unique to just one fellow. Last month's meeting got really interesting when the need to call local law enforcement for vandalism or theft became necessary. So, here are some stories from that round table discussion.

BILL MC KEE led off with the funniest story of the bunch, so I'll follow suit.

It seems someone broke into his maintenance shop and stole his torch welding set. They loaded it into the back of a pickup truck, which they started by hot wiring, and drove to the clubhouse. After breaking into

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the clubhouse and proceeding to the administration offices, they located the safe. The torch was put to work in an attempt to open the safe and escape with the loot. They managed to finally get the safe open, but not being good safecrackers and knowing the ins and outs of the operation, when the safe was finally opened, all the money had been burned to a crisp.

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NOT BEING BASHFUL, I chimed in next with my horror stories, which began one day after Hurricane Wilma. Now it's not bad enough that your course has been shredded by this hurricane and 350 feet of 6-foot chain link fence was knocked down by falling trees; you're exposed to the less desirable residents of the neighborhood and they take full advantage of the situation.

First night. They broke into the pro shop and stole a brand new flat-screen TV, the hard drive to my computer

and all the beer they could carry from the storeroom, which was significant since they used a stolen E-Z Go turf truckster to haul away the loot.

Another night. They broke into the maintenance yard we share with the park and take four golf carts and two more turf trucksters from under the noses of the sleeping park security guards out onto the golf course and totally destroy them by playing demolition derby.

Still more. After a resident comes into the park and finds someone to talk to, we learn the location of the first stolen truckster that was used to haul away the first night's bounty. My mechanic and I go and retrieve the vehicle. Park security has been beefed up and a third guard is brought in presumably to keep the others awake. Wrong. This night, they hot-wired a tractor with a front-end bucket to smash the security pole gate — which I'm sure was a silent opera-

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tion since it's only 4-inch galvanized pipe — and escaped with several more carts. Thank God we were closed for 17 days otherwise we would not have had enough carts to open.

Things quieted down after that because there was nothing left to steal or tear up. In February, I was mercifully transferred to a facility 28 miles closer to my home and the vandals from hell became a distant memory. I still talk to my assistant there and he told me recently the pillars of society had come back for an encore performance. As of this writing, there are still carts missing in action in beautiful North Miami Beach. Throughout this entire ordeal, the police were magnificent, they didn't do squat.

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JOE PANTALEO chips in next with a couple of gems. When he was at Key Biscayne, someone was coming through an area that was not secured but not visible or accessible to the general public, and riding on the course. Not tearing up the turf but leaving tire tracks on fairways and slopes of tees and greens which were visible for days afterward. He and his supervisor decided to set a trap for the culprit. A couple of 8-foot 2x4s with 16-penny nails driven through them were placed at ground level where the vehicle was gaining access.

The next morning, they had caught the perpetrator red handed. When they arrived at the sight of the 2x4 trap, they had captured a police car with 4 flat tires. No sign of the officer or ever an explanation about why he was riding the course between midnight and 4 a.m. One idea comes to mind, but this is a family magazine.

Joe's other story was not that exciting, but it could have been. While at Fort Lauderdale C.C., and while he was out of town, a small, single-engine plane made an emergency landing on one of the fairways. Apart from some torn-up turf and the hassle of disassembling the aircraft for removal, there wasn't much else to tell, but the potential for disaster was huge.

One Adam twelve, see the man...

**THERE ARE NONE
SO BLIND AS
THOSE WHO WILL
NOT LISTEN**



**GREEN
SIDE
UP**

**By
JOEL JACKSON**

Does that quote in the title of this column sound wrong? I'm talking about two different things – sight and hearing, right? Maybe I'm really talking about learning and comprehending. And I guess the difference really lies in the eyes, ears and brains of the beholder.

All this is leading up to an update on the recent flurry of activity surrounding the Sarasota County and City of Naples quests to consider new regulations dealing with the composition and formulas of fertilizers, timing of application, location of application and anything else that will limit the use of fertilizers.

By having industry and IFAS representation at these commission meetings, we have slowed down the rush to judgment to a series of working meetings to hammer out the details of potential local rules and ordinances. While this only serves to frustrate the activists who see all the problems but don't want to hear the facts, it makes the politicians have to listen to both sides before they act.

The activists' view of the world is narrow and very simple — “Man bad, nature good.” The politicians are in a tougher spot. They represent all of us. Only a few are on the fertilizer Ban Wagon, and when industry reps and IFAS scientists show up with a folder full of facts and a willingness to

promote and adopt best management practices, it's hard for them to turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to the logic and common sense of our position.

The City of Naples passed a resolution calling for the certification of landscape workers so they understand the importance of being environmentally friendly when they apply fertilizers. So landscape companies will pay \$175 per year for a permit and send their people to training class at \$50 a head.

Who's training the homeowners?

The resolution will expose more landscape workers to stewardship concepts, which is a good thing, but how will fertilizer application actually be monitored? To the city's credit they said they would lead by example. That might be something if they do it right. Actual rules governing fertilizer use in Sarasota or Naples are still being debated so we aren't done yet. You can show your support by attending some of these meetings.

Naturally the activists think it's too little too late and will continue to grumble, which is their right of course. While accusations and fiction often make the story more exciting for stirring up the masses, the general public is mostly ho-hum on the matter. Common sense and good science thankfully have brought some reason to the discussions even if those facts don't make into the headlines.

The moral of the story is simple: When these ordinances are proposed we (YOU!) need to attend these meetings. If the only people showing up are the activists and naysayers with their narrow-minded agendas, then that's all the politicians will hear. They won't see the progress and positive impact the green industries have on the environment.

Say “Thank you” to Dr. Laurie Trenholm of UF/IFAS, Erica Santella of TruGreen Chemlawn, Betsy McCoy of the Florida Sod Growers Cooperative, Mary Hartney of the Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Association, Tim Hiers from the Everglades GCSA, George Cook from the Suncoast GCSA and a few others for attending these meetings on your behalf.