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FOREWORDS

Hope for the Best - Plan for the Worst

Writing an article to be printed in the future is tough; you never know what tomorrow might bring. This past year has been full of ups and downs with our industry, the economy, jobs, health, weather, gas, and fertilizer costs.

It has almost been as wild as some of the rides at a fair but hopefully we have all weathered it with a positive attitude and can start out this New Year with higher expectations than the last. The elections are over thank goodness and gas prices are down, so hopefully this will at least level things out for a while. I still think it is going to take a few years for the housing and stock markets to resume some normalcy but I do believe (hope) it will be sooner than later.

But for now we all must deal with the realities of the nation's economic slowdown. At my course I was told to lay off five employees including my assistant. It was a hard thing to have to do. Every course is dealing with cutbacks in different ways based on their situations. On top of that, my wife's sister was diagnosed with breast cancer. We will be making changes in our lives to support her. The point is bad things happen to good people and we must be prepared to meet those challenges when they come.

With things being as uncertain as they are, I think it is important that you take a look at your personal plans just as we look at issues at work, so no matter what challenges come your way, you have a plan of action. Having a plan will help you face things calmly rather than reacting to situations that may arise. You can make better choices, and ultimately achieve your goals or at least some stability for yourself and your family.

I was reading some of the other past President's Messages and one that I thought might need revisiting now is Cary Lewis' Winter 2001. In his message he talked about the BMPs and how they were just beginning to actively work on them and how this tool will not only serve as a great resource for our members, but also better position our industry with our regulatory agencies,

local and state governments and special interest groups.

The Georgia GCSA stepped up and showed that they supported their Water Conservation BMPs by getting some thing like 97 percent of their courses to comply with the plan. It saved them from a greens-and-tees-only watering restriction and allowed them to use 65 percent of their permits. I think it's time for us to do the same and endorse and support our Golf BMPs.

I have not seen any emails come across my in-box that say "City Council doing away with Fertilizer Ordinance." So I challenge all of you who have not sat down and reviewed the checklist in the back of the BMPs to do so. You do not have to spend a lot of time on it and all of your answers do not have to be "yes" but at least you will know where your course stands. Why not make it one of your goals for the New Year?

At this time you probably don't have to turn the checklist in to anybody, so it would be wise to have an idea of what you might need to do to comply with the BMPs. You will probably be surprised at how much you are already doing. If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask Joel or myself.

I hope most of you will still be able to go to the GCSAA Show and Golf Championship in February. I look forward to seeing you at our reception.

Remember: Make a plan to cover contingencies in these uncertain times. It can always be changed as needed.

Most of all I hope everyone has a good new year.



Shane Bass, CGCS
President