

Letters..

...to the Editor

Food Quality Protection Act

GCSAA Role

I attended the Western Crop Protection Association conference on FQPA, and am coming to realize that the use of pesticides on golf courses will not be part of the risk cup analysis, i.e., while we knew applicator (occupational) exposure will not be included, I think exposure to golfers will not be included either. That doesn't mean the outcomes of the EPA analysis won't affect us as manufacturers decide what to do! But I think EPA won't be using any data from golf courses.

Your interaction with IWG (via Florida FQPA Working Group) allows you to keep up on these things — what do you think?

How is your model survey coming along? Is it something that I can/should share with our leadership? The Government Relations Committee meets in October, and I have on the agenda to discuss what more GCSAA could/should be doing. Could you make me a list of your ideas? I would appreciate it very much. I'm not sure RISE is doing enough for us, and may be depending too much on ACPA (American Crop Protection Association).

Do you have plans to attend the RISE annual meeting in West Palm Beach? Let me know if you need program information.

Cynthia Kelly Smith, JD, CAE
Government Relations Counsel,
GCSAA
(Email)

While it is heartening that golf courses may not be included in risk and exposure analysis, the danger lies in manufacturers possibly limiting labeled uses of pesticides to achieve EPA tolerance reassessment approval. Only when we can be assured that manufacturers will not have to eliminate labeled uses for minor crops — turf and

"I believe that a large and burdensome system of government regulations usually does more harm than good. Before the late Congressman Delaney passed away, he expressed his wish that these conditions be flexible as scientific discovery progressed."

ornamentals — can we relax our vigilance in the FQPA implementation process.

I had advised Ms. Smith that superintendent response to the Organophosphate Use survey has been disappointing so far. Should we be placed in the position to demonstrate the minimal impact golf courses have on risk and exposure, we do not have any survey results or facts to back up our claims. Please talk to your chapter's external vice president and get a copy of the form which asks you to document OP and Carbamate use from May 1997 to May 1998. Sources will be kept confidential.

Tim Hiers will be making a presentation at the RISE annual meeting and has agreed to discuss the golf course position with the director of RISE. Based on Tim's comments, we may be able to provide GCSAA with some more ideas on how best to address the FQPA issue.

]]

Senator Weighs In

Thank you for contacting me regarding the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). It was good to hear from you.

The President signed the FQPA into law on August 3, 1996. Previous laws prohibited the use of any pesticide or food additive that had been found to cause cancer in humans or animals, no matter how low the estimated possible threat. Modern technology, which makes chemical traces noticeable up to parts per billion, has made this absolute standard unworkable and nearly impossible to implement. The Food Quality Protection Act of 1995 amends the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act and reforms the 1958 "Delaney clause" to allow the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure a

"reasonable certainty of no harm."

I believe that a large and burdensome system of government regulations usually does more harm than good. Before the late Congressman Delaney passed away, he expressed his wish that these conditions be flexible as scientific discovery progressed. Since 1958, our knowledge of the effects of these chemicals has grown tremendously, making the "Delaney clause" both obsolete and a hindrance to American competitiveness.

I have heard from many Floridians concerned with the manner in which the Environmental Protection Agency will collect data and make decisions. It is my sincere hope that the FQPA will lead to practical, scientifically based standards incorporating data made available by both the people who make and use pesticides.

Again, thank you for taking the time to contact me. Knowing your thoughts about this important issue helps me better represent you and the state of Florida here in the United States Senate.

Connie Mack
United States Senator

This is the second letter I have received from Senator Mack on the FQPA subject. I share it to provide you with talking points about the original reasons and intent of the FQPA law. Words like flexible and practical and scientific are in the letter of the law. It remains your responsibility as a citizen and pesticide user to make sure the bureaucrats do not cloud the issue and alter the intent with personal and political agendas. See the FQPA Update article in the Official Business section for other developments on the FQPA issue.

]]

**Far and Away
But Not Forgotten**

The Gulf Coast GCSA serves superintendents in Florida's Panhandle, southern Georgia and southeastern Alabama with education and turf research support. The new IFAS Research and Education Center in Milton has become a focal point for its activities. The Gulf Coast GCSA is affiliated with the GCSAA.

A demonstration of foliage plants and annuals for use in golf course landscapes drew lots of interest from Gulf Coast superintendents at the July Field Day at the Milton WFREC. Photo by Joel Jackson.



You never know what a UF IFAS Extension professor will be doing when you drop in. Dr. Bryan Unruh adjusts the bedknife on a Toro walk mower at the Milton Campus, also known as the West Florida Research and Education Center. Photo by Joel Jackson

Dr. Unruh and Mark Richard, CGCS discuss the progress of the new ultradwarf turf plots on the Milton WFREC USGA-spec green. Photo by Joel Jackson.



FGCSA At-large member and former South Florida superintendent Mark Richard, CGCS is the manager of the Fort Walton Beach Golf Club. Mark is also the East Zone director for the Gulf Coast Chapter. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Central Zone director for the Gulf Coast Chapter is Chip Owens, CGCS. Chip is the superintendent at The Moors GC which hosts the Emerald Coast Senior PGA Tour event. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Another former South Florida superintendent is Ron Wright, CGCS at the Country Club of Mobile. He is an FGCSA member at large and the West Zone director for the Gulf Coast Chapter. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Palm Coast Firestorm



Timber harvesters race against the clock to harvest and salvage trees damaged beyond natural healing during the firestorm of Florida's East Coast. Many man hours will be spent evaluating and tagging damaged trees for harvest or removal for safety reasons. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Fourth of July Fire Storm

The final insult from the El Niño phenomenon that dominated our winter and spring weather patterns was a 90-day drought that led to ravaging wildfires when lightning sparked 70 to 100 brush fires in June as sporadic rains returned. Brevard, Volusia and Flagler counties were hardest hit as the fires, fanned by high winds, became uncontrollable over the fourth of July holiday.

A tour of the area, one week after the fires were extinguished, revealed that several courses sustained damage to the woods adjacent to the course, but Matanzas Woods GC in Palm Coast suffered the most, losing a couple of tractors and mowers and a rain shelter on the course. They also sustained some damage to the clubhouse. The course will remain closed until repairs are made.

It was interesting to note that the superintendents at all three courses made every attempt to protect the course and the equipment under their charge, except when under official evacuation orders. They all agreed that the controlling factor in the movement and intensity of the fires was the wind speed and direction. Narrow strips or fingers of burned areas could be seen showing the routes the fires took

to access various areas and leave others alone.

Mike Fabrizio, director of golf course maintenance, was overwhelmed by the fury and intensity of the fire storm that destroyed nearly 50 homes in the surrounding area.

"I thought we might be able to help control the fire with our irrigation and the open spaces to act as fire breaks, but we lost the electricity to the pumps from the fire and there was no stopping that monster as it roared through." The dense pine woods that surrounded the homes and golf holes and the high winds were a deadly combination.

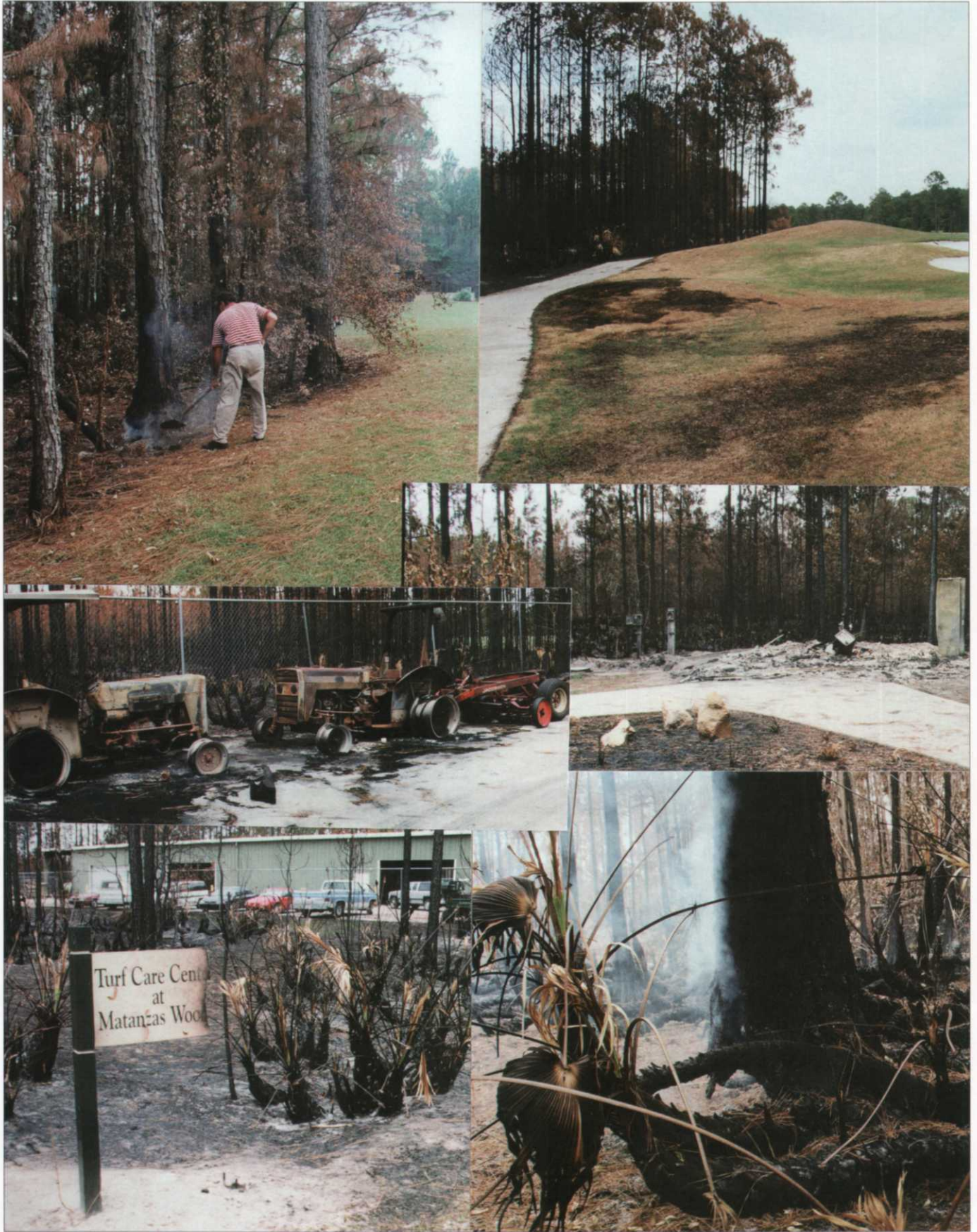
Scott Bessette at the LPGA International GC in Daytona Beach said that northwest winds had the fire bearing down on the LPGA headquarters and the Indigo Lakes development a little farther to the east. Both properties were under mandatory evacuation orders. However, the firefighters were able to establish a line of defense using the LPGA course and control the fire. Scott was allowed back in

and he was able to use the irrigation on the south course to help preserve some of the surrounds of the greens and tees.

Bobby Gonzalez at River Bend GC in Ormond Beach watched the fire detour around a large open field and then try to move down the rough of his fourth hole. Fortunately firefighters were able to cut a fire break and stall the fire before much of the woods was damaged. Here are some of scenes one week after the fire storm.



Matanzas Woods superintendent Andy Maguire (left) and Mike Fabrizio, CGCS, director of golf course maintenance and construction for the Palm Coast Resort smile for the camera, but have been spending long hours getting the course back in shape. Photo by Joel Jackson.





Scott Bessette, superintendent of the LPGA International Golf Course spent the night with fire fighters as they used the golf course as a line of defense to get the fire in their area under control. Photo by Joel Jackson.



In Ormond Beach, Riverbend superintendent Bobby Gonzalez is standing by a fire break cut by fire fighters that stopped a fire after only minor damage to the rough along the 4th hole. Photo by Joel Jackson.



One week after the woods along the LPGA fairways were totally devastated, six to eight inch tall wiregrass clumps can be seen rising from the ashes as Mother Nature atones for her fury. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Blowing in from the northwest, wildfires came within 20 yards of the LPGA headquarters building with lots of LPGA historical memorabilia. Photo by Joel Jackson.

4th Annual Florida Green Photo Contest

Perennial contestant Gary Grigg, CGCS remains in focus with a stunning photograph of a pair of eastern bluebirds to capture first place in the Wildlife category in the fourth annual *Florida Green* Photo Contest. Congratulations as well to Mark Jarrell and Lear Despeaux for submitting their winning entries.



First Place, Scenic hole: Balloon over Boca Rio Golf Club. Photo by Lear Despeaux.



Second Place, Wildlife: Sandhill Crane. Palm Beach National Golf Club. Photo by Mark Jarrell, CGCS.



First Place, Wildlife: Male and female eastern bluebirds. March 1998. Royal Poinciana Golf Club. Photo by Gary Grigg, CGCS.



First Place, Course Landscape: Green and Gold. Palm Beach National Golf Club. Photo by Mark Jarrell, CGCS.



Second Place, Course Landscape: Royal Poinciana Golf Club Putting Green. Winter 1997-98. Photo by Gary Grigg.

It's been such a busy year I didn't realize that the last issue was my last President's Message for the *Florida Green*. I have a few thank-yous to pass along even though my presidency is now officially over.

First I would like to thank Darren Davis and Marie for organizing a combined two-day meeting and chapter planning session at the Grenelefe Resort last November. Joe O'Brien from the GCSAA was the facilitator and all chapters were represented. One of the outcomes of the meeting was that everyone agreed we needed to hire an additional staff person for the FGCSA. This idea had been talked about

since 1984 and it finally became a reality this year.

Joel Jackson was appointed in January of this year to the position of director of communications. The director has been and will attend chapter meetings, workshops, FQPA meetings and other functions around the state. We realized we couldn't get away from our jobs as much as we would like as volunteers, so now we have a staff person who will keep us informed of issues which affect the FGCSA.

We had another combined meeting this year with the Florida Turfgrass Association board which served to improve communication and cooperation between the two associations, particularly in the areas of FTGA conference education and

research fund-raising. We have also partnered closely on working out details on the new IFAS turf coordinator position.

I'd like to thank our education chairman, Geoff Coggan, CGCS for the job he did this year in arranging the statewide FGCSA Pesticide Safety seminars and the two Etonic Leadership seminars at the Poa Annuu and Crowfoot events.

A big thank you to Mike Perham, Darren Davis and Dale Kuehner and the rest of the board for their help and advice this past year. Thanks also to Marie Roberts, our association manager, for keeping me straight on what and when things needed to be done, especially when my *Green Sheet* President's Messages were due.

We are working every day in a great industry that is constantly changing. Whether it's EPA, FQPA, Mother Nature, employee problems or hydraulic leaks each day has a different challenge for us. We must try to keep abreast of everything that is going on and deal with it accordingly.

Hopefully you are getting the information you need from the GCSAA, FTGA and FGCSA and you are reading it. Thanks to Joel Jackson for proofreading and editing my President's Messages. I hope you gave the topics some thought and consideration.

As I write this, my term as FGCSA President is officially over, but I will continue to serve on various committees as past president and beyond. I will stay involved and write more articles to share ideas and experiences. Thanks for a great year and here's to continued success in the years to come for everyone.

Thank You

Fore-mer President's Message



Joe Ondo, CGCS
Past President
FGCSA

I've just returned from a meeting in Orlando at the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association building in which the new vice president for IFAS, Dr. Mike Martin, was introduced to the ag industry by UF President John Lombardi. On first impression, we've got a capable and motivated man now in charge of IFAS, and he may be the man of vision to lead Florida agriculture, including turfgrass, into the next century.

Sitting around the table with leaders of such industries as citrus, cattle, sugar, tomatoes, strawberries and poultry was gratifying, because I think turfgrass should be aligned with agriculture rather than pigeonholed into its own special niche

that no one seems to care about except us "grunts" who bear the burden for a huge but unmotivated industry. I feel more of a kinship with the people who were in that room than I do with the majority of the members who play my golf course; more importantly, I think it in our best interests to get on board with agriculture

in dealing with IFAS and the Legislature. David Barnes and Ralph White, also in attendance, agree that we should strengthen these ties and begin active participation in this group, probably the core of a revitalized Florida Ag Council.

The meeting was an eye-opener. Apparently turfgrass isn't the only commodity group less than satisfied with its relationship with IFAS. In some regards, such as input into research project selection, we exert more control than most of the other groups — even those who put in a lot more money than we do.

A big concern — one I hadn't realized — is how often an IFAS researcher accepts grants from an environmental group or a regulatory agency like the South Florida Water Management District, and the results are used to harm, hobble, or destroy some part of Florida's agricultural industry. As it was pointed out to Drs. Lombardi and Martin, none of us minds adjusting to concerns based on real science, but pseudo-science and politically motivated regulation is unacceptable and especially galling if its basis comes from an IFAS department which is also heavily funded by our industry.

I've been in Dr. Lombardi's presence enough

times now that I shouldn't be surprised by the depth and range of his intellect and insight. Nevertheless, I was impressed by his understanding of agriculture and the strategies and technology it must develop to face the challenges of a global economy. He told of changes already in place, such as faculty accountability, financially crediting the proper department for students taught, and of consolidating the IFAS and UF budget proposals — all of which should be of benefit to IFAS — leaving me with the impression that he fully understands that agriculture is the foundation of our society.

I am not so naive as to think that "feel good" meetings always translate into action, but I am encouraged that we have a president and a vice president who will help us to help ourselves. The accomplishments of the past two-and-a-half years are significant even if we have been disappointed in the pace at which they have happened and at those needs as yet not met.

We finally have a turfgrass coordinator, Dr. John Cisar, to take the lead in our dealings with IFAS and unify the various stations into a coordinated, effective program. We have more turfgrass students at the University of Florida than we've had in many years and, for the first time, they can get a degree in turfgrass science. We have two new turfgrass breeders, Drs. Russell Nagata and Brian Scully, who are talented, dedicated, and dynamic. We have a pathologist renowned for his rice disease research, Dr. Lawrence Datnoff, who wants to work in turfgrass if he can get some financial support. We have a whole new branch in Milton headed by Dr. Bryan Unruh that is enhancing the entire turfgrass program rather than just serving its region.

Thanks to our equipment manufacturers and distributors, the turfgrass program has over \$100,000 worth of new equipment with which to maintain the plots and research greens. While many other turfgrass programs in the South are going south, we continue to make progress.

The FTGA and the FGCSA are working together on strategies to increase funding for turfgrass research projects. Ron Garl, as the new president of the Florida Golf Alliance, and Roy Bates are working to secure support from the allied organizations of that group as well. With continued effort, we will make the UF Turfgrass Program the best in the country, serving the needs of the biggest and best golf and turf industry in the country.

IFAS, Agriculture and Us

Mark My Words



Mark Jarrell, CGCS
Vice President
FTGA

This is my first day on the job, so be patient. I realize that I am trying to fill some very big shoes. Mark Jarrell has done a great job and has written some very fine articles that I certainly enjoyed reading over the years. Mark is moving on to serve on the FTGA board and we all wish him well.

As I watch the news these days, it seems that there are many popular storms out there. First there was Bonnie, a category-three hurricane that churned off the Florida coast for days and made many people nervous. As she finally turned to the north and headed toward the Carolinas, we turned our attention to Danielle. At

the same time, President Clinton was bracing for a hurricane named Monica.

As superintendents, we deal with storms all the time. Like President Clinton these storms can be political and caused by other people. These storms can be large weather- and news-makers like hurricanes and El Niños or they can be groups that don't see things the way that we do. I am amazed sometimes how much we depend on the weather. Starting in the fall, we worry about too much rain washing our seed. If we get a good germination, we then worry about weather that is too hot and/or wet if you seed early, or too cold and wet if you seed later.

Once we have established our overseeding, then we have to contend with El Niños, then droughts, then even forest fires. We then depend on the weather for a smooth transition. It's funny how we are never satisfied with the weather. It seems that it can be too hot or too cold, or too wet or too dry. I guess that no matter what, we just have to deal with it and hope for better in the days to come.

Our jobs are multi-dimensional and weather is just one of the factors that can affect our jobs. A few years ago I remember that I was talking to a fellow superintendent and I caught myself complaining about the weather. At that point I finally realized that day in and day out, we have

some of the best weather in the country and, from then on, I vowed to try to not complain about something that I have no control over.

To a degree we do have control over some of our political storms. It takes patience and control to make this work and sometimes it still may be a hopeless situation. As superintendents we may need to sell ourselves and our programs and I have found that the proactive approach has worked best. Being a good grass grower rarely is enough anymore. Members like to see you around. Make it a point to be seen if only briefly during important club or course tournaments.

Ride the course or at least nine holes in reverse order on a busy day so that many of your golfers can see you. Take every opportunity to write an article in the club newsletter. Get to know the other chairpersons at your club as well as the directors. Try to play golf with members when the time is appropriate.

You may even want to briefly hang around the pro shop to be available to the members. This way if a member has a question, you can answer it directly. Overseeding is such a critical time of the year it is important to be visible. Your reputation for the year is dependent on your getting those little seeds up and growing and molded into an acceptable putting surface by New Year's.

As we head into the overseeding season, keep your head up and keep moving forward. It seemed for a while that every time that I put out seed, it would rain cats and dogs sometime during that week. It got to the point that other superintendents in Vero Beach would call to find out when I would be seeding so that they could pick another week. My first year at Bent Pine, I got 13 inches of rain in the first two weeks that my seed was down. We've all had weeks like that but we keep on going. It keeps our jobs interesting.

I am looking forward to this new position with the *Florida Green*. We can always use stories written by our fellow associates in this great business. As we go into the fall season, be sure to have fungicide on the shelf and an umbrella handy.

Stormy Weather

The Bell Tolls



Scott Bell, CGCS
Assistant Editor

You say you had a lot of rain this past winter? Your course lost some revenue? You say you had a tough time with your greens. Well aren't you glad you didn't have to rebuild Pebble Beach? After finally drying out and putting it back

together, they just finished playing a golf tournament in August that they started in January.

You say you were hit with a scalding hot drought this past spring, and you had a rough transition? Well, aren't you glad you didn't have to evacuate the county because a wildfire

was burning up your golf course? At least now they've got better air circulation around those greens.

You say your irrigation system is outdated and you had a rough time watering during the drought? Had to work overtime and do extra hand watering. Well, aren't you glad that, when the rains finally came, they didn't come all at once and wash away the dam that controlled your irrigation lake. Here you go. Hook up to this 2-inch fire hydrant and water the course. The city will fix that dam when they can get around to it!

You say you have to use the summer months to do projects because that's when the members are gone and it cuts into your summer vacation. Well how would you like to have five summer renovation projects going on at once. They're all interdependent and one contractor is

holding up the others and you've got a course to open in 60 days. Not even lawyers can solve this one!

You say you got some heat over the course conditions this past winter? You thought you had the course back in good shape. Well, how would you like for a buddy to call you and tell you he just saw your job advertised in an out-of-town paper? The good news is the superintendent who is still the superintendent can apply for his old job which he still has while they search for someone else.

These are just a few examples of when your grass is greener than the other guy's. About the time we think we're getting dumped on by someone or by nature, there's always somebody that's in the same boat or even in worse shape.

That's why a visit to your local superintendent chapter's monthly meeting can be very therapeutic and ease the weight on those sagging shoulders and put the spring back in your step. You are not alone when the slings and arrows of adversity are hurled at you. It is how you handle the pressure that helps you through these ordeals. There's strength in numbers, so get on over to that next meeting and find out how your peers are coping with the frustrations of this wonderful but often wacky profession.

And then there is this one. The big guy from Arkansas leans on the podium, looks right into the camera, shakes his finger at us and says, "I never had sexual relations with that woman..." After reading the Starr report, I'd say he's really got a problem. He doesn't even know what sex is!

Keep the green side up and be careful out there!

So You Think You've Got Problems?

Green Side Up



Joel Jackson, CGCS
Editor