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Evapotranspiration Irrigation Control to Reduce Turfgrass Irrigation Water Use: a two-year study to be conducted by Dr. Michael D. Dukes at the University of Florida, Gainesville. The objective is to quantify irrigation water savings via commercially available control systems. This \$11,500 project was funded entirely by the FGCSA.

Effect of Nitrogen on the Southern Chinch Bug: A one-year study to be conducted by Dr. Laurie Trenholm and Dr. Eileen Buss at the U. of Florida, Gainesville. The objective is to determine if fertilizer rates for St. Augustinegrass lawns should be modified to decrease susceptibility or increase tolerance to chinch bug infestations. This \$6,346 study was funded entirely by the FTGA.

Field Evaluation of Bioherbicide Control of Tropical Signalgrass: a two-year study to be conducted by Dr. Carol Stiles and Dr. Raghavan Charudattan at the University of Florida, Gainesville. The objective of the research is to assess effective methods of bioherbicides on tropical signalgrass, a difficult-to-control, invasive weed species. This \$23,094 study was funded by the FTGA, FGCSA, and the GCSAA.

The Billbug Species Complex, Seasonality and Management in Florida: a one-year study to be conducted by Dr. Eileen Buss at the University of Florida, Gainesville. The objective is to better understand the billbug's true activity on Florida golf courses in an attempt to reduce unnecessary insecticide use in controlling the insect. This \$13,895 project was funded by the FTGA, FGCSA and the GCSAA.

Root Knot Nematodes on Turf in Florida: A two-year study to be conducted by Dr. Billy Crow at the University of Florida, Gainesville. The objective is to be better able to diagnose root knot nematode problems of golf course turf and lawn grasses and provide management recommendations. This \$18,883 project was funded by the FTGA and FGCSA.

Credit: Third Quarter 2006 Florida Lawn Newsletter by the Florida Sod Grower Cooperative

From Out of This World



AS IT LIES

BY
JIM WALKER

The year is 1953. The Place is Old Cutler Road and SW 140th Street in Kendall. Real civilization stops about 7 miles north of here in South Miami. People who were living in Miami proper were beginning to move south to the acre estates out in the boondocks. This particular boondock is now 5 minutes west of Deering Bay Yacht & Country Club, and is one of the most desirable areas of Dade County. Homes start at a million bucks and go up from there. My mother's parents decided to leave their home just minutes from the Orange Bowl and join the pioneers and risk takers who were choosing to move to an area that was so dark at night that it went beyond black.

My grandmother is of English descent and her family came down from Manchester, N.H. My grandfather, a wisp of Italian trouble, came to Miami in 1922 with Pathe Studios as a chief electrician to film cowboy and Indian movies on the Miami River. He went on to become the first "Master" electrician in the state and owned Miami Electric, which ripped off car dealerships up and down Biscayne Boulevard and NW 36th Ave in west Miami near the airport for years. What do car dealerships need as much as cars and ruthless salesmen? Lights of course... tons of them to illuminate their shiny new cars.

Unfortunately, what my grandmother didn't realize was that the early 1950s was also the time when Americans became aware that we were not alone in this galaxy and dark areas outside our towns and cities is where UFOs and aliens chose to land and explore.

New Mexico didn't have an exclusive on visitors from outer space. My grandparents' 11-acre tract off Cartee Road was regularly visited by Snoozeria the Martian Bear, who always seemed to show up when my two cousins and I would spend a weekend down south in the boondocks.

So here's the deal: In 1953 I am 9 years old, my cousin Bobby is 8 and his sister Barbara is almost 7. It's Friday night about 9:30 p.m. and everyone is getting ready for bed. We have already been warned by "Daddy Fred" (granddad) that Snoozeria had been spotted recently not only by him but by a couple of neighbors also. There was talk of missing cats, dogs and rabbits, but so far no confirmed reports of young children being abducted. This wicked man set the stage for his little shop of horrors by warning us to not get out of bed and to stay under the covers no matter what happened.

When the lights went off shortly before 10 p.m. it was so dark you could not see your hand six inches in front of your face. Within minutes, Snoozeria, was scratching on our bedroom window. It absolutely scared the crap out of us. The next morning when Nanny asked how we had slept, we told her about our visitor. Sometime later I understood why she gave my grandfather such an evil look. The scenario went on for the better part of a year. No matter how many times it happened and mind you it didn't happen every time we visited, we could not wait to get back to Cartee Road again.

When I relay this story to people now, they all say how bad it was of my grandfather to scare us the way he did. I say, how many kids can say they had an ongoing love-hate relationship with an alien from outer space? Besides it didn't have any negative effect on the three of us. We all stopped wetting the bed by the time we got to high school and Bobby stopped being afraid of the dark when he went to Vietnam to fly helicopters. The last time I spoke to Barbara, she, like me, still sleeps with a night light on.

Now you are asking yourself what

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the heck does this have to do with golf and my answer is not a darn thing. Although as I just wrote that line I remembered that when I was 12 years old, my uncle gave me my first golf lesson in the backyard of my grandparents' UFO landing site.

And what happened to my pal "Snooze?" Sometimes when Susi and I visit our friend Jim "Cornfed" Kusters, a Master PGA Professional who lives on Lake Marion in Haines City, I will get up at night and go look into the darkness of the lake and on more than one occasion I could have sworn I saw Snooze zip by in his tri-powered Scarab wearing a yellow Speedo waving to me and remembering the good times back in the 50's.

Maintenance Motto: Get It Done



**GREEN
SIDE
UP**

**BY
JOEL JACKSON**

I read recently that Ben Curtis, winner of the 2006 Booz Allen Classic, paid tribute to the golf course maintenance crew after the tournament was extended two days by weather and finished on an unprecedented Tuesday morning. Curtis said, "They did a wonderful job of getting the course ready. They worked harder than we did getting this tournament done." That scenario reminded me of our maintenance marathons at Disney back in the "good old days" when we hosted the Oldsmobile Scramble and the Disney Classic back to back.

When you consider all the logistics and preparations needed to pull off one PGA Tour event, just imagine doubling that stress and working split-shift

schedules two weeks in a row and trying to have prime tournament conditions three days after the first event wraps up on Monday morning.

All the landing areas are already inundated with divots from one pro and four amateurs hitting shots. What was the tournament committee brain trust thinking besides the convenience of having Tour players on hand for the next week's event?

Don't get me wrong. It was an exciting time and adrenaline kept us going, but it was absolutely no fun during some Octobers when we would get those tropical systems late in hurricane season. It would often get too wet to mow fairways and bunker-bailing was a new routine. Lift, clean and place was the rule of the day. Besides the rash of divots from the previous Scramble week, player and caddy footprints were just as bad in the sodden turf.

It was a welcome relief when the final putt was holed and the tournament was over for another year. And in those rainy years, tearing down the tournament trappings meant more weeks of course damage and repairs. When things returned to normal, there always seemed to be an emotional letdown after being all keyed up and under the gun to perform. We always were acknowledged for our hard work publicly during the trophy presentations, but I wonder how many people really understood the level of effort that was expended.

It is easy for golf fans to focus on the heroic efforts at TV golf events, especially the majors, when maintenance crews and teams of volunteers put the pieces together day after day while Mother Nature tries her best to disrupt the proceedings. Of course at these events big money and livelihoods are involved with TV schedules, sponsorships and tournament purses. The pressure to be open on any given day at your local course may not seem as critical, but on some level it is all important. Lose a weekend day or a special event and that's revenue not coming in. It all adds up.

Blessed are those with well-drained golf courses either with sandy soil or

...perhaps the club should make sure the superintendent has a computer with a link to the Internet and a budget that will let this valuable agronomist-engineer-manager continue his or her education...

good drainage systems. Blessed are those with USGA-spec greens and not "push-up" greens. Blessed are those with wall-to-wall cart paths. Blessed are those courses with members or customers who can read and obey traffic control directions the day of or after a torrential rainstorm. Blessed are those with budgets big enough to have several lightweight fairway mowers and the staff to man them.

Managing your golf game or a golf course isn't rocket science, or is it? When you consider launch angle, trajectory, ball speed, rotation, coefficient of rebound, and torque, perhaps golfers should carry slide rules or calculators in their golf bags. And when maintenance folks must deal with bedknife relief angle, soil pH, bunker sand size and shape, soil porosity, hydrology and meteorology, perhaps the club should make sure the superintendent has a computer with a link to the Internet and a budget line item that will let this valuable agronomist-engineer-manager continue his or her education beyond watering, fertilizing and mowing.

Superintendents aren't clones. Some work harder than others. Some work smarter than others. But they and their crews all shed blood, sweat and tears at times to take care of the golf course.

To ignore that effort is a shame. To not even be aware of the effort is a travesty. To hear someone praise that effort is sublime.

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