

News coverage to be expanded in '92

It's hard to believe that summer is half over and we're working on fall issues and planning for 1992. Just the other day, registration forms for the GCSAA showed up! In case you haven't received yours, dates are Feb. 10-17, 1992, in New Orleans, La.

I recently met with our editors to plan our editorial features for 1992. I can assure you Golf Course News will expand our editorial coverage into some exciting new areas. The editorial features appear monthly and I will share the upcoming

schedule as soon as it is finalized.

Since my last column appeared, I've had some interesting travel, meeting new business leaders along the way. A good part of the time was spent in the Northwest at two field day events. (Our editorial staff cover a few of those events on page 47.)



Charles von Brecht

This was my first full exposure to these educational and fun events. Both events I attended at Jacklin Seed and Turf-Seed were well attended and good learning experiences.

A highlight of Jacklin's field day was Dr. Eliot Roberts' eloquent oration on turfgrass. The gist of the talk was comparing the environmental stability of grasses to trees. As Dr. Roberts suggests, "turf grasses indeed do stand tall among the trees." If you have not heard or read of Dr. Roberts' research, you

should contact him at the Lawn Institute in Pleasant Hill, Tenn.

No doubt, the highlight at Turf-Seed was Dr. Bill Meier. Through a steady rain, Bill conducted a tour through acres of grass as though the sun were shining brightly. I look forward to attending these events again next year.

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Recently, I've had a couple of letters in response to items in this column. Please call or write if you have any comments, questions or criticisms.

COMMENT

'Oneself' gives way to 'others' at two facilities

By Mark Leslie

At a time when "oneself" is often one's favorite person...

At a time when "self-serve" has replaced "a helping hand"...

At a time when the popular magazine of the day has evolved from the '50s' Look to the '60s' Life, '70s' People, '80s' Us to today's Self...

At a time when newspapers are filled with stories of people pushing their own agendas at any cost — lying and terrorism notwithstanding...

At a time like this, it is refreshing to see the selflessness of some in the golf industry, the community in Akron, Ohio, and of one lady in Arkansas.

Edwin Shaw Hospital in Akron opens a golf facility for the physically challenged on Aug. 21 after three years

of planning.

Retired Navy nurse Shirlee Hicks on Sept. 1 will then open Golf for Life, a practice facility in Berryville, Ark., for people undergoing physical rehabilitation.

The two projects are the first in the country built for the physically challenged individual.

Ms. Hicks, who just this year started a golf program for the deaf for the LPGA in California, says her Arkansas creation targets a person's body, soul and spirit.



Mark Leslie

She and the therapists and officials at Edwin Shaw agree a handicapped person who can play the game has improved self-esteem.

Indeed, the spirits of all involved in these two projects should measure higher on the Richter scale of satisfaction.

One person gratified by the two efforts is Bob Wilson, executive director of the National Amputee Golf Association. He called the two efforts "pioneering" and said he was anxious to see their playability and the response of the public.

Wilson conducts clinics for the handicapped around the country and finds a group of golfing hopefuls/physically challenged wherever he goes.

Accolades in this scenario should go to Ms. Hicks, who has gone the distance on her own — no outside financial backing and no partners. They should also go to the many who helped Edwin Shaw Hospital complete a project that includes a three-hole course and a masterful 15-acre practice range, both of which can be used by the general public when handicapped people are not booked.

Helpers from the golf industry include Wadsworth Construction Co., the builders; Hurdzan Design Group, the course architect; LESCO, Inc. and Commercial Pump, who donated their products. They donated everything that was needed — giving of themselves for others.

That's unique in this year 1991.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Truth doesn't get in the way of 'toxoterrorists'

(Editor's note: A report substantiating information put forward in this commentary accompanies on pages 13-14)

By Tim Hiers

When the Trojan horse was wheeled inside the fortified walls of Troy, the inhabitants of Troy perceived it as a gift. It was a tragic misperception that cost them their freedom and their lives.

Today, perception plays a key role in society's decision-making. We are simply too busy (or think we are) to seek out the facts. Decision-making by perception makes our society vulnerable to those who want to promote their own agenda by manipulating perceptions.

Many Americans perceive that pesticides are a great cause of cancer and death in this country. Yet science (without politics) is telling us something vastly different. The average life span in the United States is approaching 76, while in the year 1900 it was 47.

Are we living longer because we eat more organic food? No, we ate more organic food 91 years ago. Today it's Pizza Hut and MacDonald's.

Is it because we exercise more? No. Could you imagine a farmer after 10 hours plowing fields need-

ing to go to a health club for exercise some nine decades ago?

I believe technology, including medicine, and properly used pesticides are the primary reasons Americans are living longer. Our society, especially a good majority of those under the age of 50, takes many things for granted.

American journalist Harry Golden once commented: "The arrogance of the young is a direct result of not having known enough consequences. The turkey that every day greedily approaches the farmer who tosses him grain is not wrong. It is just that no one ever told him about Thanksgiving."

If we were to severely reduce or eliminate pesticides, our future Thanksgivings might be greeted by malaria, yellow fever or starvation due to crop failures.

Unfortunately, we have developed a dangerous habit of criticizing and obstructing the very tools that have actually improved the environment and our quality of life.

An old Spanish proverb succinctly states the danger of obstruction:



Tim Hiers

"Habits are first cobwebs and then cables."

Samuel Johnson took it a step further, saying, "The chains of habit are generally too small to be felt until they are too strong to be broken."

How did we get into this habit of worrying about pesticides while America is being ravaged by drug abuse, child abuse, poor education, crime, alcohol, etc.?

Strong evidence and documentation exist that reveal almost invisible, small, well-organized, effective and powerful ideological groups who have orchestrated and perpetuated this negative pesticide perception on the American people.

Originally, this group consisted of remnants of the 1960s movement, Marxist/socialist college professors, the media and other anti-capitalistic and anti-Western radical factions. Today, this real cancer permeates some key government positions, a large number of our university students and is even being promoted in our lower grade systems. (Read Herbert London's "Why Are They Lying to Our Children?")

These subversive groups are willing to use any device — whether it be deception, coercion, manipulation or lying — to achieve their

agenda.

For lack of better definition, I will refer to them as pseudo-environmentalists, or p.e.'s.

Peter Meadows, of Australia, has dubbed them "toxoterrorists."

They attempt (and have been successful at large) to appear to be environmentalists, but in reality they represent America's modern-day Trojan horse.

Their goals and agenda are fairly simple: Use the environmental movement as a hidden tool to promote socialism or Marxism and to bring capitalism down through the system.

Let me clarify, this does not refer to all environmentalists — only those with ulterior motives.

It has been said: "The most dangerous untruths are truths moderately distorted." This is where the p.e.'s excel.

By using fear, distorted reports and lack of public knowledge, they can fool our government and its agencies into making counter-productive decisions. These same p.e.'s publicly renounce big government and its intervention in our lives while supporting legislation to increase the size of government and its control of private industry.

I believe there are six key steps

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Hiers comment

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toward bringing a scientific and balanced view toward pesticides and golf courses in general.

1) Know the p.e.'s plan.

Can you imagine a major college football coach and his associates not taking the time to study game films of their next opponent, or a general planning a major attack without the benefits of surveillance or intelligence?

For years, we in the golf industry have addressed every issue except the p.e.'s who have unjustly attacked pesticides and golf courses. Until we address this problem rather than its symptoms, the battle will continue to be a losing one. The p.e.'s, once understood, are fairly easy to identify: anti-capitalistic, anti-technology, pro-socialist, pro-distortion,

The following list of 30 hazards were ranked by Decision Research — and reported in the February 1982 issue of *Scientific American*) in terms of perceived risks according to several test groups, and by actual risks based on scientific data:

1. smoking
2. alcoholic beverages
3. motor vehicles
4. handguns
5. electric power
6. motorcycles
7. swimming
8. surgery
9. X-rays
10. railroads
11. general aviation

12. large construction
13. bicycles
14. hunting
15. home appliances
16. fire fighting
17. police work
18. contraceptives
19. commercial aviation
20. nuclear power
21. mountain climbing
22. power mowers
23. scholastic football
24. skiing
25. vaccinations
26. food coloring
27. food preservatives
28. pesticides
29. prescription antibiotics
30. spray cans

and pro adding to the size and cost of government.

The real versus the perceived

The order in which the hazards are listed here is the actual order of their risk according to actuarial estimates, with smoking being the most hazardous.

Where did you rank pesticides in the list of 30 risks to our health and mortality?

Business and professional men ranked pesticides 15th.

The League of Women voters ranked them 9th.

College students ranked them 4th, ahead of alcoholic beverages and motor vehicles.

In actuality, pesticides rank 28th, behind bicycles (at 13) and skiing (at 24).

Their plan: Bring a new order to America, go back to the "good old days," grow your own food, limit technology, increase politically correct education; all this plus a new twist, at least for this country, redistribute the wealth. Isn't it amazing that the countries that employ these ideologies are generally the world's worst abusers of our environment and people?

2) Expose the p.e.'s with truth, integrity and facts.

Truth and facts are to a p.e. what flea spray is to a flea; they can't live with it. It has been said the strongest thing on earth is the truth. We cannot afford to exaggerate one fact or figure. We have to build a solid foundation because we are addressing people with no moral laws. Remember, they will use any method to advance their cause. We must be prepared to face stiff opposition early on, even among well-intentioned Americans who have been misled the past three decades.

3) Get our house in order.

We have the unenviable task of having to live up to the expectations not imposed on other segments of society. The p.e.'s have lured Americans into a zero risk mentality (with no grasp of risk/benefit) toward pesticides, when it is not demanded in any other arenas — automobiles, drugs, etc. As a result, thanks in part to the media which gravitates toward the negative, our chain (superintendents) can only be as strong as the weakest link.

Unfortunately, there are still superintendents or clubs who feel no responsibility to participate in the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America or its continuing education programs.

All the best efforts of 10,000 diligent, environmentally conscious superintendents can be severely impaired by one who is uninformed.

The GCSAA has done an outstanding job responding to its members through environmental education. But just being a member of GCSAA and your local chapter is not enough. It is imperative to participate in GCSAA and local chapter seminars, field days and other educational programs.

Finally, just do the basics and do them well. Keep your shop and equipment clean, train and motivate your employees, and adhere to the regulations. Don't deviate from the law. There's too much at stake, individually and collectively.

If you don't know or understand the regulations (and that's common) find a superintendent who does — but do it! Take the time to study and employ concepts of integrated plant management. For years top superintendents have successfully used this program and continue to fine tune it.

4) Inform/educate the public and earn its trust.

We must become pro-active, not reactive. In almost every town there is a superintendent adept at speaking to audiences. They

need to address our Rotary, Lions, garden and flower clubs, etc. to tell the truth about pesticides and golf courses. A good way to start each presentation would be with GCSAA's new video "Links with Nature," which highlights a course's interaction and actual enhancement of the environment and wildlife. An excellent way to demonstrate positive benefits of courses to the public would be to join New York Audubon Society's Cooperative Sanctuary Program. This would be a wise and beneficial investment for any club. Continued involvement and dissemination of factual information will be paramount in earning the public's trust.

5) Inform/educate the media and build a foundation of credibility.

Get to know the local media so they can place faces with names. Again, keeping your complex and equipment in immaculate condition will build a powerful and positive connotation toward you and your course. Don't expect too much too soon because good stewardship usually doesn't make exciting headlines and most members of the media have been saturated with one-sided anti-pesticide propaganda.

A caveat here: Some members of the media do not want facts or balance — so be careful!

6) Educate politicians and agencies. This will continue to be difficult, but some inroads have been made. We cannot wait for them to come to us. We have to visit them.

Finally, we must persist and set the example. Remember, peoples' minds are changed through observation and not through argument.

The challenge ahead seems awesome, but we are not alone. One of our greatest allies will be the true environmentalists (who include the majority of superintendents) with no secret agenda. They are very concerned that the p.e.'s will harm and even discredit the real cause.

What is the real cause? Protecting and enhancing the environment through conservation, recycling, planting trees, non-political education, and research. (In 1989 \$70 billion was spent on regulations and only \$9 billion on research.)

President Eisenhower once said, "A nation that values its privileges above its responsibility soon will lose both."

As golf course superintendents and citizens, we have the unique privilege of working with nature and living in America. Our responsibility is obvious: Take our jobs seriously, do the work honestly, strive to improve our environment, and leave this world with something our children will be proud to inherit.

And our scientists have a responsibility. Where have the real scientists been the last two decades? It's time to stand up and be counted.

As for all the p.e.'s, I'll leave you with this simple thought:

Being an American is the right to be wrong, not the right to do wrong.

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