

# Have we passed saturation point in conferences?

It is hard to believe Christmas is just a couple of weeks away, and 60 days from now many of us will be heading for New Orleans for the BIG SHOW.

It has been interesting to note recently the increased activity in the promotion of regional shows.

Ohio and Florida have always been popular, but this year it seems I have seen more information regarding regional turf shows than ever before.

I know it makes sense to turf managers to support their regional shows. But can the suppliers to the industry continue to add regional shows and regional support to distributors and sales efforts in these uncertain economic conditions?

A major supplier to the industry recently mentioned that the company will have supported 80 shows and exhibits in 1991.

That might be an extreme case, but it's got to stop somewhere. I don't know the answer - if you have any comments or suggestions, please let me know.

As we head for the New Year, I am pleased to announce that we have added two new members to the editorial advisory board. Tim Hiers, CGCS, manages the 54 holes



Charles von Brecht

at the John's Island Club in Vero Beach, Fla. I played the West course recently and was in awe of the natural beauty. Tom Fazio was able to retain and Tim and his staff maintain. It's hard to believe some of the elevations that are part of the natural terrain of this unique property on Florida's east coast.

The other new member is Kevin Downing, CGCS. He manages Willoughby Golf Club in Stuart, Fla., and has started to get into some design work.

I've had the opportunity to work with both of these course managers and found them to be true professionals.

Both Tim and Kevin participated in the Golf Course News Market-

ing Conference in September, and along with the other members of the panel, were right on target with the subject matter under discussion.

We look forward to having Tim and Kevin on our board.

The first week of December marks the start of the 14th annual JC Penney Classic and the second year at Innisbrook's Copperhead course, where vice president of golf operations Jay Overton and staff have a new starting hole for this mixed-team championship.

As I've mentioned before, I've been fortunate to be associated with this fine tournament and look forward to a fine field of PGA Tour and LPGA Tour players.

## COMMENT

# It's the season to put priorities into perspective

We had a good time in this issue asking superintendents around the country what they would most like to get for Christmas for their golf courses. We thank them all for sharing their dreams for their courses.

Dreaming is great. Planning is better. Reality is sometimes tough to take. My dream — aka prayer — for this Christmas season is that we would all take stock of the realities of the world around us and put our own personal worlds in perspective.

Not to sound ethereal, I mean to say, let's place our toys, games, hobbies and even political ideals in a package, take a step back and view them for their real importance.

Two very divergent events bring this to mind — Christmas and a bizarre occurrence that happened at a Florida golf course.

First, for most people reality and priorities take a vacation during the Christmas season in America. Our society tends to turn on the lights

(on the trees and houses), turn up the volume (of holiday music) and turn our heads (away from the poverty, despair and pain around us).

Lost is the true meaning, the "why" of Christmas — salvation from a loving God. ("For there is born to you this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord... a light to bring revelation to the peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel. — Luke 2:11 and 31-32)

No holiday gimmicks. Rather, reality. And priorities.

Yet, reality and priorities take a vacation somewhere every day, not just Christmas. It happened one day recently for people in a golfing party at a Florida course. Buried in the news pages of Nov. 16 was a tale that, at once, made me both lose a



Mark Leslie

breath to shock and disbelief and accept it as another tale of where our society stands. You might hope the story is one of fancy, but the word that comes to my mind is macabre. Stephen King would be proud to include it as a queer kind of aside in one of his novelettes.

It seems a man died of a heart attack on the 15th green. His foursome ended its game, but the rest of the group the foursome was with played through, skipping only the 15th green where the man's body lay for two hours until authorities arrived and did their duty.

Tell me: Am I wrong or is this a **bold print** statement on our priorities and what we human beings think of life? I don't know where this particular golfer went to spend eternity, but was his death not worth mourning? — Or were the last three holes of that round in Florida life-or-death holes for the golfers?

The man apparently was barely worth a second thought to his golf group. "Gee, that's a good way to go," said one — probably with a

"Pass my driver, please" punctuation mark.

All of us associated with the industry love golf. We depend on it for our livelihood. We practice it, play it, watch it and read about it. But how all-consuming is it? And how all-consuming are our other pastimes?

Just how important is the Super Bowl, anyhow? Or the World Series? Or Wednesday night's bowling league? Or that Saturday morning round of golf?

Reality. We can handle it — at Christmas time and on the golf course — if our priorities are in the right place. Get our priorities right, and the other things will fall into place.

Now, enjoy your Christmas, remembering why we celebrate it. And, Jerry Faubel, Tim Hiers, Randy Gai, Joe Adams, Joe Esposito, George Frye, Tom Fisher, Jim Burton, John Granholt and all you other superintendents around the country — I hope you all get your wishes... this year.

## GUEST COMMENTARY

# Pro-golf publicity campaign is must for the industry

By Larry Hawkins

The scenes in the public hearing forums of the golf development approval process have not changed significantly within the past few years. While the golf industry has made remarkable progress in accumulating academic studies and other research documenting positive findings and environmental benefits of golf courses, public perceptions of golf development continues to present differing views.

The concerns and issues on golf development expressed by organized environmental groups and concerned citizens in public hearings have basically remained the same. Golf course developers, architects, engineers and planners frequently involved in the permitting process can easily predict the issues in sensitive projects. Water

quality, wetlands and wildlife habitat are consistently at the top of the public's list.

These are followed closely by the more politically oriented topics such as water and natural resources management, and the assertion that golfers are an "elitist" special-interest group.

It is often said the "critics" and "objectors" offer few, if any facts to support their negative, environmental views on golf courses. The golf industry, rightfully, maintains the position that there is a wealth of independent, government and academic studies documenting that



Larry Hawkins

properly designed and maintained courses do not degrade but help the environment.

Obviously, there is a broad chasm between the positive conclusions of numerous studies on courses and the environment and the persistent, contrary public perceptions on environmental issues.

Part of the answer to this quandary may lie in the fact that we are dealing with emotional and perceptual issues rather than technicalities. The golf development industry has a "public image" problem.

### ILL-INFORMED OFFICIALS

It is evident that the public, government administrators and regulatory reviewers are not aware of the significant and recent advances in modern golf course design and maintenance, water resource and

environmental management, wetlands and water quality management technologies.

Perhaps we should consider the recent environmental image problems faced by other industries and their approach toward public perceptions. The controversies over the fast-food industry and foam packaging and metal containers, and pulp and paper industries over resource management and the resulting recycling programs have been highly publicized.

Many major industries have projected a public image of "environmental consciousness" through public media information campaigns. You don't have to thumb through many outdoor magazines to see a full-page, color message on wetlands preservation sponsored by

Continued on page 11

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

### Publisher

Charles E. von Brecht

### Editorial Director

Brook Taliaferro

### Managing Editor

Mark A. Leslie

### Associate Editor

Peter Blais

### Contributing Editors

Kit Bradshaw

Vern Putney

Bob Spiwak

### Editorial Advisory Board

William Bengueyfield

Kevin Downing, CGCS

Willoughby Golf Club

Tim Hiers, CGCS

The Johns Island Club

Dr. Michael Hurdzan

Hurdzan Design Group

James McLoughlin

The McLoughlin Group

Brent Wadsworth

Wadsworth Construction

### Production Manager

Joline V. Gilman

### Circulation Manager

Nicole Carter

### Editorial Office

Golf Course News

PO Box 997

38 Lafayette Street

Yarmouth, ME 04096

(207) 846-0600

### Advertising Office

#### National Sales:

Charles E. von Brecht

#### Marketplace Sales:

Simone M. Marsteller

#### Golf Course News

7901 Fourth St. North

Suite 311

St. Petersburg, FL 33702

(813) 576-7077

#### West Coast Sales

Wayne Roche

James G. Elliott Co.

714 W. Olympic Blvd.

Suite 1120

Los Angeles, CA 90015

(213) 746-8800

#### United Publications, Inc.

Publishers of specialized business and consumer magazines.

#### Chairman

Theodore E. Gordon

#### President

J.G. Taliaferro, Jr.



CHARTER MEMBER

Copyright © 1991 by United Publications, Inc. All rights reserved and reproduction, in whole or in part, without written permission from the publisher is expressly prohibited. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Manager, Golf Course News, P.O. Box 1347, Elmhurst, IL 61026-9899.

## Publicity needed

Continued from page 10

one of the major auto makers.

The nutritional campaign within the fast-food business to counter health critics is very visible. Television spots featuring environmental awareness messages on recycling, wildlife, resources and the oceans sponsored by government, special interest groups and industries proliferate.

Golf industry trade journals, magazines and professional publications continually feature articles on environmental issues, new studies and the positive environmental benefits of golf. These are popular topics at golf development conferences, seminars and association meetings. The industry has continued to effectively document that golf courses do not pose an environment threat and that the industry considers environmental stewardship as a prime responsibility.

How is it, then, that some public factions and environmental groups continue to be critical of the industry through the same, repetitive issues and negative perceptions?

### GO OUTSIDE THE INDUSTRY

One answer may be that we are failing to convey the positive information to the public at large. Perhaps we are spending our resources and energies internally spreading the message within the industry and not the greater audience of interested golfers and the concerned public.

Many architects, superintendents, consultants, writers and developers have expressed concern that we are spinning our wheels trying to "convert the converted." Is it now time that we bridge the gap between the wealth of positive environmental information accumulated within the golf industry and the public at large?

Certainly, if we learned anything from the Sherman Hollow experience (in Vermont) and many other similar situations, it is that public misconceptions and perceptions significantly increase the cost of course construction through expensive and lengthy, drawn-out administrative approval processes.

Perhaps this country's millions of golfers would be more concerned and involved in these matters if they clearly understood that this is one of the primary reasons for increased costs of memberships and greens fees at new courses.

Many in the industry have an economic stake in the continued prosperity and growth in the immense, worldwide popularity of golf.

Who among the professional organizations, equipment manufacturers or the many golf media and tour event supporters is willing and able to support a public information campaign on the environment and golf?

There are beginnings. A public television cable channel recently aired a one-hour documentary on golf courses and wildlife, produced in England in cooperation with the BBC and a local golf association.

Certainly, television golf fans got a glimpse of modern course design and environmental management during the national coverage of the Ryder Cup at Pete Dye's Kiawah Island Ocean Course and the PGA Tour event TV trailer. "We want people to be mad about golf — not mad at it!" is a message in point.

The gauntlet is at our feet and, clearly, the future perceptions of golf, environmental issues and regulatory consequences are in the hands of the golf industry.

*Larry K. Hawkins is president of GeoScience Inc., an environmental science and engineering firm specializing in golf development permitting located in Gainesville, Fla. He is a frequent speaker at golf development conferences and contributor to golf magazines and journals.*

## N.Y. attorney general rep defends his position on Cape Cod study

To the Editor:

I wish to respond to a statement by GCSAA President Stephen Cadenelli in your article entitled "N.Y. AG attacks industry chemical use" (GCN, September 1991) and to a letter by Stuart Cohen (GCN, October 1991).

Both concern the Cape Cod Golf Course study, which was conducted for the U.S. EPA and the Cape Cod Commission (CCC; formerly the Cape Cod Planning and Economic Development Commission).

I had disputed the significance ascribed to that study by some in the golf industry.

GCN quoted Mr. Cadenelli citing the Cape Cod study as proof that "properly applied golf course chemicals pose no threat to ground waters."

The Cape Cod study provides no such proof. Indeed, the study suffered from several deficiencies (discussed below) but nevertheless discovered no less than 10 pesticides/pesticide metabolites in the ground water sampled.

On Long Island and Cape Cod there is simply no question that golf course pesticides have already been detected in the ground water.

Even so, the Cape Cod results cannot simply be extrapolated to Long Island. At the four Cape Cod courses, annual application rates ranged from 2.7 to 4.4 pounds of active ingredients per acre of golf course, while Long Island courses reported annual application rates up to 22 pounds of active ingredient per acre.

Clearly, differences in application rates and local hydrogeological factors contribute to differences in the impacts.

In his letter Dr. Cohen identifies himself as the Cape Cod study "director ... and first or sole author of two articles published." Certainly he must be aware of the full report on this same study ("Cape Cod Golf Course Monitoring Project," June 1990) by the Cape Cod Commission (CCC) Water Resources Office.

The CCC report notes several deficiencies in the study which I pointed out to GCN. Dr. Cohen apparently now denies these problems.

First, when interviewed by GCN, I explained that some of the wells were dug too deep to detect surface-applied pesticides.

Dr. Cohen responded that all monitoring wells "... were screened at or just below the water table."

But the CCC report states (p. 46) that "... study protocol called for the wells to be designed such that 3 feet of the installed 5-foot screen would penetrate the water table.

Unfortunately, the screens were not placed at consistent depths at each of the golf courses. Many of the wells were drilled so that the whole screen was below the water table; in one case the top of the screen was 11 feet below the water table."

The CCC report continues to explain that "...the deeper wells would be sampling water from a different recharge event from a different area."

Second, I explained to GCN that some wells were placed where they would not efficiently intercept leaching pesticides.

Dr. Cohen claims that all of the green, tee and fairway wells "... were placed at the edge of those areas so that ground water would be sampled that was influenced by turf management of greens, tees or fairways as appropriate."

The CCC report (p. 47) recognized that proximity alone is not enough, but that the direction of ground water flow must be considered.

It states that "...regional water tables were used to place the wells at points which were believed to capture ground water off designated course features (greens, tees, fairways). Unfortunately many of the wells receive flow that avoids or only partially captures flow off the areas of concern."

Third, as I reported to GCN, "The Cape Cod study authors acknowledged the deficiencies..." some of which I have cited above.

Dr. Cohen takes me to task for not consulting him or his "geologist-coauthor, Joe Senita" who, incidentally, is not even acknowledged as a study participant in the CCC report.

There was no need to consult him or the editors of the CCC report, when it spoke so clearly on these problems, perhaps he could explain why.

Finally, the attorney general's report is not an attack on the potential for ground water contamination from the use of pesticides on golf courses. On Cape Cod and Long Island, golf course pesticides have already been found in the ground water.

The challenge now is the development of appropriate means to help insure that golf

courses coexist without damaging critical ground water resources.

Rather than deny the obvious, Dr. Cohen, in his current role as consultant to the golf industry, might best focus his efforts on helping his clients choose wisely, and use sparingly, the pesticides they apply.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Sorgan, Ph.D.

NY State Department of Law

## Sunbelt used laser tech

To the Editor:

I found your October issue article on laser technology very interesting. It seems Mr. Connor was fortunate enough to witness our laser leveling unit operating at Palm Ceia Country Club. I like to think he "borrowed" our concept to promote a method of building better tee boxes. As was mentioned, we have used laser leveling for agricultural and preparation for many years.

I'm glad that Mr. Connor is promoting laser leveling to enhance the quality of the tee construction; however, this machinery, like any other, requires experienced and dedicated operators to assure that quality.

Thought you may be interested to know that two of our most satisfied customers include Mr. Connor, who employed our laser leveling at Seminole Golf Club and Pinehurst No. 2, where we recently leveled tees.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I hope you don't mind me setting the record straight "a little bit".

Sincerely,

Roger Hruby, president

Sunbelt Services

Palmetto, Fla.

*Editor's note: In our feature story Ed Connor indeed acknowledged that he first saw laser technology used by Sunbelt Services at Palma Ceia Country Club. He said he saw a tee at eye height and "it looked like it was sliced with a diamond cutter. It was perfect." The technology has also been used by Alan MacCurach at MacCurach Golf Construction, the PGA Tour's Dave Postwaite, and, perhaps, others.*

Please mail letters to: Letters, *Golf Course News*, P.O. Box 997, Yarmouth, ME 04096.

# Formost Construction Co.

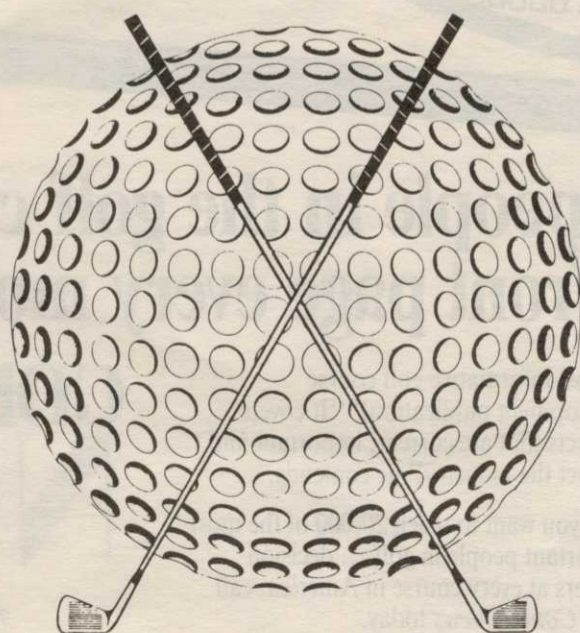
IRRIGATION SPECIALISTS

"Doing One Thing Well"

P.O. BOX 559  
TEMECULA, CA 92593

(714) 698-7270  
FAX (714) 698-6170

STATE LIC. #267960



Serving the nation for over 30 years