

Golf industry needs a lobbyist of its own

The golf course industry has a simple but nevertheless enormous problem in our nation's capital. Image and perception are everything in Washington, and golf is sorely lacking on both counts:

- For those of you waiting to see whether the Clinton Administration would follow through with its commitment to reduce pesticide use, you can stop waiting. The legislation was introduced in May and it will be difficult for Congress to stand in opposition.

- The national media increasingly depicts golf courses as flash points in the environmental debate. The *Wall Street Journal* article, "Golf Courses Are Denounced as Health Hazards," run on May 2, is only the most recent example (see my editor-to-editor response at right). As for Paul Harvey... well, don't get me started.

- And despite the monumental growth of public-access golf—and the fact that two-thirds of the nation's courses are open to anyone—the sport is still seen as a pastime for rich, white males who discriminate against women and minorities while erecting their new play-



Hal Phillips,
editor

grounds atop environmentally sensitive lands or ancient burial grounds.

It's time the golf course industry pools its efforts and resources, and the first step should be a golf-only lobbyist in Washington, D.C.

Now, before I go any further, a word should be said about RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment), the specialty chemical trade association. RISE and its executive director, Allen James, have

done a creditable job representing golf's interest. But the job is too big and RISE has plenty to occupy itself outside the golf realm.

Further, sending a lobbyist to Washington is just what the golf industry needs to pull people and organizations together.

For a while there, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) seemed determined to go it alone. But the superintendents have changed their ways, as exhibited by their recent cooperation with the United States Golf Association (USGA) and

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It's time for golfers to pay their fair share

Over the years, the entire golf industry has borne the cost of turfgrass research. The United States Golf Association, private industry, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and state and regional chapters have all gone to great lengths to raise money, then given it away to scientists investigating everything from pesticide fate to low-input turfgrasses.

Now it's time for the end-user—the golfer—to pitch in. Golfers are, after all, the beneficiaries of the lifetime of hard work superintendents and their crews devote to creating perfect playing conditions.

The Arizona green industry took a severe blow this spring when two legislators killed legislation that would have assessed 10 cents per round of golf, with the funds bankrolling research. The entire golf industry reeled, stunned by that debacle. Similar legislation is in effect in various states supporting research in citrus, agriculture and other industries. Superintendents and scientists around the country expected to push for this type of law. That may still happen.

But in the meantime, others are undeterred in their own innovative efforts to raise funds.

Dick Stuntz of Alvarado Country Club in Lawrence, Kan., may have pioneered another way to skin this



Mark Leslie,
managing editor

cat—using mailings to GIN Handicap users to ask for donations for research (see page 13). Stuntz and his green industry colleagues in Kansas should be lauded. They and others must have unique ideas to pass on. We welcome the chance to be a clearinghouse for these ideas, tried or untried. Multiply a \$2 donation by the number of golfers applying for handicaps in America and the potential is truly enormous for the Kansas-type fund-raising alone.

The industry could take the lead from organizers of the Herman Sani Fund in Iowa, which provides scholarships to graduating high school seniors. For 30 years they have raised funds at state tournaments. Sometimes it's voluntary. Other time, a donation is simply added to tournament charges.

There must be myriad solutions to the money problem. One thing is certain: "A worker is worthy of his wages." And scientists from the University of Massachusetts to the University of Arizona continue to solve problems affecting golf courses.

They should get the support they need. And golfers should be among the supporters.

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Earthquakes and mass murders grab the page 1 headlines—and rightfully so. Yet disasters some-

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Letters

BORDER COLLIES NEEDN'T BE PUREBREDS

To the editor:

In response to your "On The Green" article in the March edition of *Golf Course News*, I have owned a border collie since 1983. His name was Samson. Unfortunately, I had to put him to sleep, because of leukemia, which his mother had also died from. Since his death I was able to find another border collie, named Divits. Border collies were raised to herd sheep, and for the most part they do it instinctively, so doing the same with geese comes as a natural instinct. Both dogs took to chasing geese within a few months after I acquired them. Samson cost me nothing and Divits only cost me \$180.

With Samson, the mention of geese would excite him, and he would start looking everywhere for them. If the geese found their way into a pond, he would follow and chase them, until they would

give up and fly away. When Samson died, I knew I would have to get another border collie, so I went on a search for one. I found a place where they had a border collie with what I think had some husky in him. I was not sure he would take to herding geese as well as Samson had. The first few months he seemed to not even notice the geese, but they sure did notice him. As soon as they saw him, they flew away. After about two months, Divits started chasing animals. By the third month he understood the word geese, and would start looking for them, until he found them. I had another dog, who loves to chase geese.

I guess, what I am trying to tell you is that border collies do love to chase geese, and you do not have to spend \$2,000 for a perfect dog to get rid of geese. I did talk to Richard Marcks, owner of the border collie, Tac, you wrote of in your article, and his dog was trained

exceptionally well. But border collies do tend to obey their masters instinctively, and neither of my dogs has ever gotten into a situation where the geese were going to drown them. His dogs are also trained not to bark, and I have yet to figure out how to keep mine from barking. If you do not have \$2,000 to buy a dog to rid the golf course of geese, I would still recommend a border collie, just one you will have to train yourself.

Thomas F. Dale, CGCS
Radnor Valley Country Club
Villanova, Pa.

CAPTURING THE 'FLAVOR OF THE WADSWORTH WAY'

To the editor:

I would really like to thank you for writing such a wonderful article about Wadsworth, its legacy and the people who have had the opportunity to be associated with this outstanding firm. Not only

was your article accurate, but was extremely well written and I think that it encompassed the flavor of the Wadsworth Way.

I am particularly grateful that you mentioned that Mr. Wadsworth and the Wadsworths' team-work being on a spiritual level. Because, you know when all is said and done the most important things are relationships between people, not money or power or status or recognition and I truly think the most successful people in the world are the ones that are the most humble.

Mr. Wadsworth has been able to demonstrate that when you place the clients' needs above yours and also above all else, you will succeed.

Your article portrays this very nicely. All in all, it was a wonderful article.

Craig Schreiner
ASGCA, ASLA
Kansas City, Mo.

WALL STREET JOURNAL REPORT OFF THE MARK

(The following letter was dispatched to the *Wall Street Journal* following its publication of the story, "Golf Courses Are Denounced as Health Hazards," on May 2.)

To the editor,

Headline aside, Timothy Noah's story on golf courses and the environment (May 2) was balanced and thoughtfully researched. However, the contention that golf courses apply seven times more pesticides than do farmers and homeowners is yet another example of political hyperbole.

The farming vs. golf debate (and just who applies more pounds of chemical per treated acre) has raged for some time, and citing the now infamous 1991 study from the N.Y. Attorney General's office has become commonplace. Unfortunately for the environmental lobby, it's the only study in recorded history that supports its argument. Further, the study's lead researcher has long disputed the AG's final "edit," which enabled the study's conclusion to match its initial intent—namely, to paint golf courses as environmentally voracious.

Compared to farmers, golf courses do not apply as much pesticide per treated acre—a fact the British environmental movement has accepted for decades. In addition, if a golf course covers 150 acres, less than half the acreage is actually treated, whereas farmers spread pesticides wall to wall. Furthermore, on golf

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