

Misplaced concern drives EPA regulatory policy

The ultimate fate of America's golfing public was relegated to secondary importance when Dr. Burton Kross presented results of his GCSAA-commissioned Mortality Study last month in Dallas.

Kross, an associate professor of epidemiology at the University of Iowa, reported that, historically, golf course superintendents have been more likely to contract certain types of cancer than the general public. And while he stressed there is no proven causal relationship between the cancers and the superintendents' exposure to pesticides, he stated rather

definitively that golfers — or course "patrons" — are in no way at risk.

This came as no surprise to industry members in the Dallas audience, but it also struck me as somewhat ironic because pesticide policy — as issued by the federal EPA and various state agencies — is almost completely driven by the perceived effects of chemical exposure on the public at large, not superintendents. In a culture where stories of licking golf balls seem to carry more popular weight than the



Hal Phillips,
editor

preponderance of scientific data, it was refreshing to hear Kross dispel an all-too-common myth — namely, that pesticide use poses a threat to the general welfare.

Whether it poses a threat to superintendents is not clear,

which is why the GCSAA, chemical manufacturers and the golf course industry all support further study.

Most everyone acknowledges that chemical handling practices were woefully insufficient during the 1940s, '50s and '60s, when subjects of the Mortality

Study — those GCSAA members who died between 1970 and 1992 — tended to their courses. Further, most everyone agrees that manufacturers have complied above and beyond the call of duty when it comes to applicator training, specific labeling and continual laboratory testing. The 10 years of research which any product must undergo before EPA approval, speaks for itself.

The new GCSAA leadership did the right thing by addressing the study pro-actively: Quickly releasing the story to news organizations, soliciting the input of other industry

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Take note: Quotes worth remembering from Dallas '94

Attitudes and foundations. These are what the International Golf Course Conference and Show provides and supports each year. And so it was in 1994 — from the educational sessions on agronomy, to superintendent Peter Leuzinger's rendition on attitude, to U.S. Golf Association Green Section agronomist Bob Brame's analogy between the foundations of greenkeeping and faith.

Leuzinger's quote of an unknown author about attitude was one of a number of interesting notes and quotes gleaned at the conference. Here they are, starting with his:

"The longer I live the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude to me is more

important than facts. It is more important than the past. Than education. Than money. Than circumstances. Than failures. Than successes. Than what other people think, or say, or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skills. It will make or break a company, a church, a home. The remarkable thing is, we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we want to live that day. We cannot change our past. And we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is



Mark Leslie,
managing editor

our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it. And so it is with you. We are in charge of our attitudes."

Politics invades the links: Hearing a long-winded congratulatory letter from President Clinton, Old Tom Morris Award-winner Byron Nelson said: "It goes on and on, doesn't it? If he keeps writing like that I might have to vote for him next time."

Factoids remedy, bring on the TV cameras: Ron Dodson, president of the Audubon Society of New York: "We can deal with factoids with Preparation F."

No copycats here: "I don't know how people can copy golf holes. It's impossible. We couldn't even copy our own," said Roger Rulewich, asked by Sunbelt to replicate a par-3 hole on all the Jones Trail courses in Alabama.

Hands-down: Best-looking couple in the business is Bob and Christine Faulks of Greensmix.

He just keeps going and going and...: In a surprise appearance at the American Society of Golf Course Architects session, 87-year-old Robert Trent Jones Sr. said that although a visit to a chiropractor three years ago resulted in a broken back that has slowed him down, it has not stopped

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Letters

HURDZAN ANSWERS EPA CHIEF

Michael J. Hurdzan, who heads Hurdzan Golf Course Design, Inc., in Columbus, Ohio, sent *Golf Course News* this copy of his letter to EPA Administrator Carol N. Browner.

Dear Ms. Browner:

I just finished reading your guest editorial in *Golf Course News* (January 1994 issue) and either you or I are very badly informed.

You specifically indicated that golf courses use four to seven times more pesticides than farms. But how about compared to a home lawn, vegetable garden or even the White House Rose Gardens and grounds?

You also indicated the increased sensitivity of children who walk golf courses, and pesticide runoff that can severely threaten drinking water supplies. Is the basis of highlighting those issues to inform or inflame?

I consider myself an aggressive environmental advocate with a strong earth science background (Ph.D. in plant and soil sciences) who stays in tune with all golf course-related issues and incidents. Yet I have no knowl-

edge of any incidents you allude to, at least in the past five years. Therefore, I would appreciate it if a member of your staff could specifically cite proven examples such as you mention.

If your staff finds no such incident, then I think it would be appropriate for you to so state in another guest editorial. Frankly, the action plan of your letter reads like something from the mid-1980s, for golf courses and turf managers have been doing what you suggest for years.

We in the golf course industry pride ourselves on being the leaders, and not followers, in this current green revolution. I can provide your staff scores of recent research findings, including those from the EPA's Cape Cod study, that support my point and vindicate golf courses.

I would expect a person of your leadership position to be rather open-minded and deliberate about any position you enunciate as administrator of the EPA. I would further expect you to be more like the blind scales of justice, weighing proven evidence and data with the goal of implementing long-term protection of earth, rather

than simply distributing outdated, unsubstantiated advocacy rhetoric. For the sake of science and future generations who depend upon us, let us deal in fact and not scare propaganda.

I look forward to your answer, for if the communication folks of the turf industry are covering up severe or significant environmental degradation or incidents, they need to be taken to task.

As a passenger and parent on this spaceship, I want to know if I or my colleagues are making mistakes or are acting in an irresponsible manner. These issues are far too serious to generalize about or to cover up. Likewise, if we are doing a good job, we deserve some recognition and praise.

I am clearly concerned, not just about the perception of golf courses in the environmental continuum, but also the reality of our role. I know of a multitude of positive impacts, and I want to work on reducing or removing the negative ones, but we must be specific.

Please contact me if I can further assist you.

Michael J. Hurdzan, president
Hurdzan Design Group
Columbus, Ohio

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Leslie Comment

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him. "We're still going to build a lot of golf courses. We have 33 on the list for next year," he said.

So who's counting?: The "19th hole" has a different meaning for Rulewich. When designing a golf facility with 27 holes, or 36 or 54, he thinks of the holes as the 19th, the 20th, the 36th, etc. What a memory, huh? Ask Roger to describe the 43rd hole at Opelika, Ala., then sit back and listen to him expound on the 7th hole of the short course.

Alice on thriftiness: "Our first golf course was the nine-hole El Dorado Country Club in Indianapolis. It was really supposed to be 18 holes but we spent all our money on the first nine." — Alice Dye on her and her husband Pete's beginnings

Dyed in the wool: Perry O. Dye on his mother, Alice's straightforwardness: "Her constructive criticism has made my dad's work as fantastic as it is. There's no fluff around our house when we talk about our work. If it's bad, we know it, and we have somebody to tell us right away — (Perry chuckles

as he adds:) sometimes before we're ready to hear it."

Roger and I: A "perfect" pass-catch combination in football is a quarterback and receiver who never misconnect. Thanks for the perfect pass, Roger Staubach. And thanks, K Power, for the opportunity to catch a pass from a Hall-of-Famer.

We were touched: Leuzinger showed slides of the bounteous flowers at his St. Charles (Ill) Country Club. Then, with a photo of his wife with him in the woods, he said: "This is my flower."

Best new product name: Slime. Did they pick this stuff up off the floor of the movie set at *Ghostbusters*? What does it do? You empty your tires, pump Slime into them, refill them and you won't get a flat tire for the next seven years — guaranteed. Sounds great, but how about *Flatbuster!*

Most soul-searching comment: "Sometimes it's wise for the architects to swallow their worldwide, well-known pride. Sometimes the superintendent does, too." — ASGCA President Jerry Matthews on potential clashes between the

two pros at new courses.

Just call him Mister: Joe Baidy took on his job of Herculean proportions (the presidency of the GCSAA) after completing a Rossian challenge (renovating the bunkers at his golf course). Hercules and Ross: A good duo to emulate, Joe.

Honest, he's innocent: The USGA Green Section's Larry Gillhuly of Oregon, director of the Western Region, said: "I've been asked hundreds of times if I was involved in the Nancy Kerrigan assault. The answer is 'No.' Jeff Gillhuly spells his name G-i-l-l-h-u-l-y.

SUPPLIER BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

HCC ACQUIRES DIG-IT

MENDOTA, Ill. — HCC, Inc., a manufacturer of agricultural equipment and utility products for North American and European markets, has acquired Dig-It, a Waukesha, Wis.-based manufacturer of compact towable backhoes and tractor-loader-backhoes. The Dig-It product line includes 3 models of heavy-duty compact towable backhoes popular in the Utility, Rental and Construction markets, and a compact tractor-loader-backhoe. Mendota-based HCC completed the transfer of the production operations in January of this year.

HUEBER TO HEAD ACCUFORM

MISSISSAUGA, Ontario, Canada — David Hueber, former head of Ben Hogan Golf, has been appointed president and CEO of Accuform Golf Corp., and will be one of four principals of this privately held Canadian golf accessory/equipment company. While it is probably better known for its patented sand trap rake, the company introduced Accuform II a perimeter weighted golf club in 1993.

TANAKA OFFERS WARRANTY

BOTHELL, Wash. — Tanaka will now provide a one-year commercial use warranty on many of its professional grounds maintenance products, including the most popular models of trimmers, brushcutters, hedgetrimmers, edgers and blowers. For more information, contact the nearest Tanaka power equipment dealer or call 206-481-2000.

FARMER TO DIRECT SALES AT WOODS EQUIPMENT

OREGON, Ill. — Woods Equipment Co., the manufacturer and marketer of tractor-powered accessories, has named Steve Farmer director of sales, with responsibility for the company's sales force and network of approximately 3,800 independent farm equipment dealers. Farmer was most recently regional manager for sales in the Southern Region. He will be replaced by Ron Tiller.

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