

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 5, NUMBER 3
MARCH 1994 • \$4.50

INSIDE

Of Surfers & Seals

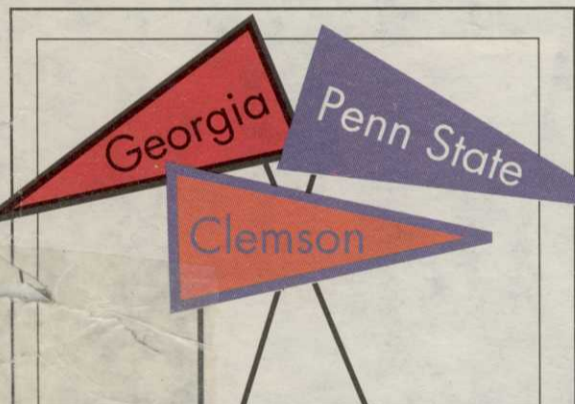
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Bye, Bye Birdie

Some birds you want, some you don't. Learn how to attract purple martins and get rid of geese 16, 70



COLLEGES TAKE SPIRITED RESEARCH STANCE

Spring break is fast approaching, but the nation's collegiate turf programs continue to produce. Working golf course laboratories will soon be realities at Clemson, UGeorgia and Penn State. Meanwhile, superintendents are scrambling to attract the best turf scholars. See pages 15, 21-23.

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Mortality study raises questions, eyebrows

By HAL PHILLIPS

DALLAS—Golf course superintendents were 79 percent more likely to contract large-intestinal cancer and 36 percent more likely to contract lung cancer than the public at large, according to phase-one findings of a University of Iowa mortality study commissioned by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

Death certificates of 618 former GCSAA members — who died between 1970 and 1992 — were gathered as part of the research, conducted by Dr. Burton Kross,

UI associate professor of preventive medicine and mental health. Of the 618 deaths, 179 were cancer related.

"Because this is a statistical study, you can't establish any cause-and-effect relationship from the data," said Kross, who presented the study's findings at February's GCSAA conference in Dallas. "Results of the mortality study provide GCSAA with a scientific basis to encourage stop-smoking programs and improved pesticide-handling practices among its members.

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GCSAA WRAP-UP

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Golf Cars: Who has the purchasing authority?

By PETER BLAIS & HAL PHILLIPS

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Wine, lockers, E-Z-GO, dinnerware, clubhouse architects, Club Car, chocolate mints, table linen, Yamaha, accounts software, tennis court contractors, Melex.

And so it goes, as one strolls the aisles and gazes into the booths at the Club Managers Association of America annual exposition here.

This is the third national trade show that golf car and utility vehicle manufacturers regularly attend. Those companies are also a major presence at the annual superintendents' and golf professionals' shows. They are easily the most visible segment of the golf industry to attend all three.

Just who is responsible for ultimately deciding what brand of golf cars to buy?

"This is something we've struggled to define since I

Continued on page 54



PUBLIC ENEMY #1

Mole crickets cause more damage to Southeastern golf courses than any other pest. How do you kill 'em? Superintendents and scientists — including the University of Florida's Dr. Howard Frank — are experimenting with traditional and biological weapons. See special report, pages 24-26.

Rohm & Haas wins Dimension sweepstakes

By HAL PHILLIPS

ST. LOUIS — We have a winner.

After months of speculation and negotiation, Monsanto has signed a letter of intent to sell Dimension turf herbicide and other products in its worldwide pyridine family of chemistry to Philadelphia-based Rohm and Haas Co.

The sale is expected to be completed by mid-year, according to James Budzynski, Monsanto's product director for dithiopyr, the active ingredient in Dimension. No

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Dr. James Watson

Architects honor Dr. Watson with '94 Ross Award

By MARK LESLIE

"Surprised but delighted" at his selection, turfgrass research and management pioneer Dr. James

R. Watson will receive the American Society of Golf Course Architects' (ASGCA) 1994 Donald Ross Award.

A vice president and agronomist with The Toro Co. who has been working with golf course architects on turf problems for more than 40 years, Watson will accept the award at the annual Ross Award Dinner on April 18, at the Olympic Club in San Francisco. The banquet will highlight the society's annual meeting.

Only the second agronomist chosen for the award in its 19-year history, Watson explained: "Their [architects] job isn't finished with the design. They still have to oversee construction of the golf course. A lot of the work I've done has involved soils for putting greens, modification of fairways and management of the golf course from the turfgrass standpoint.

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The stately 18th at Minisceongo Golf Club in Rockland, N.Y. This Roy Case design opens in June.

New Course Listings Page 45

Robert Hook photo

GCSAA's mortality study raises eyebrows and concerns

Continued from page 1

"In light of this study and other health-effect research about pesticides, a prudent strategy for golf course superintendents and their workers is to minimize their exposure to pesticides."

Allen James, executive director of RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) — a trade association comprising manufacturers, formulators and distributors of specialty pesticide products —

echoed these sentiments.

"The researchers themselves have not determined cause-and-effect relationships for these results," James said. "Our members are concerned about any person impacted by cancer. While there is no proven link between health issues and practices used to control pests on our nation's golf courses, RISE members endorse research aimed at solutions for health concerns."

In addition to a higher-than-

average rate of mortality from lung cancer, Iowa researchers found above-normal incidence of other cancers, including brain, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, pancreatic and prostate.

Release of the study has kicked off phase two of the association's exploration of occupational health issues. This will include helping association members to stop smoking, expanding GCSAA's current education and training programs, and completing a

statistical mortality ratio study to put UI's preliminary data into context, according to Steve Mona, the association's new executive director/chief executive officer.

"GCSAA initiated and financed this study because we needed to establish a baseline for future research," Mona explained. "We now have that baseline and can better identify what merits future investigation... This is a long-term commitment to ensuring that superintendents work in a safe

and healthy environment.

"We also think this gives us an opportunity to forge new partnerships... For example, the chemical manufacturers have made great strides in packaging and formulation over the past decade. This is one more reason to work closely with them in their efforts to develop new technology in products and packaging."

As Mona noted, the chemical industry has made a concerted effort to improve labeling and foster more complete applicator training over the last two decades. Those death certificates gathered for GCSAA members who died between 1970 and 1992 represent superintendents who practiced their trade in the 1940s, '50s and '60s, when exposure safety measures were not such a priority.

Further, James noted that pesticides "have undergone an average of eight to 10 years of stringent health and safety tests before being considered for registration by the EPA. Such products are used safely when applied according to label-use directions."

According to Kross, previous studies of farmers, pesticide applicators and agricultural workers have suggested that an elevated risk for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and leukemia among farmers may be associated with exposure to pesticides and other agricultural chemicals.

However, Kross warned against forming any premature conclusions about superintendents.

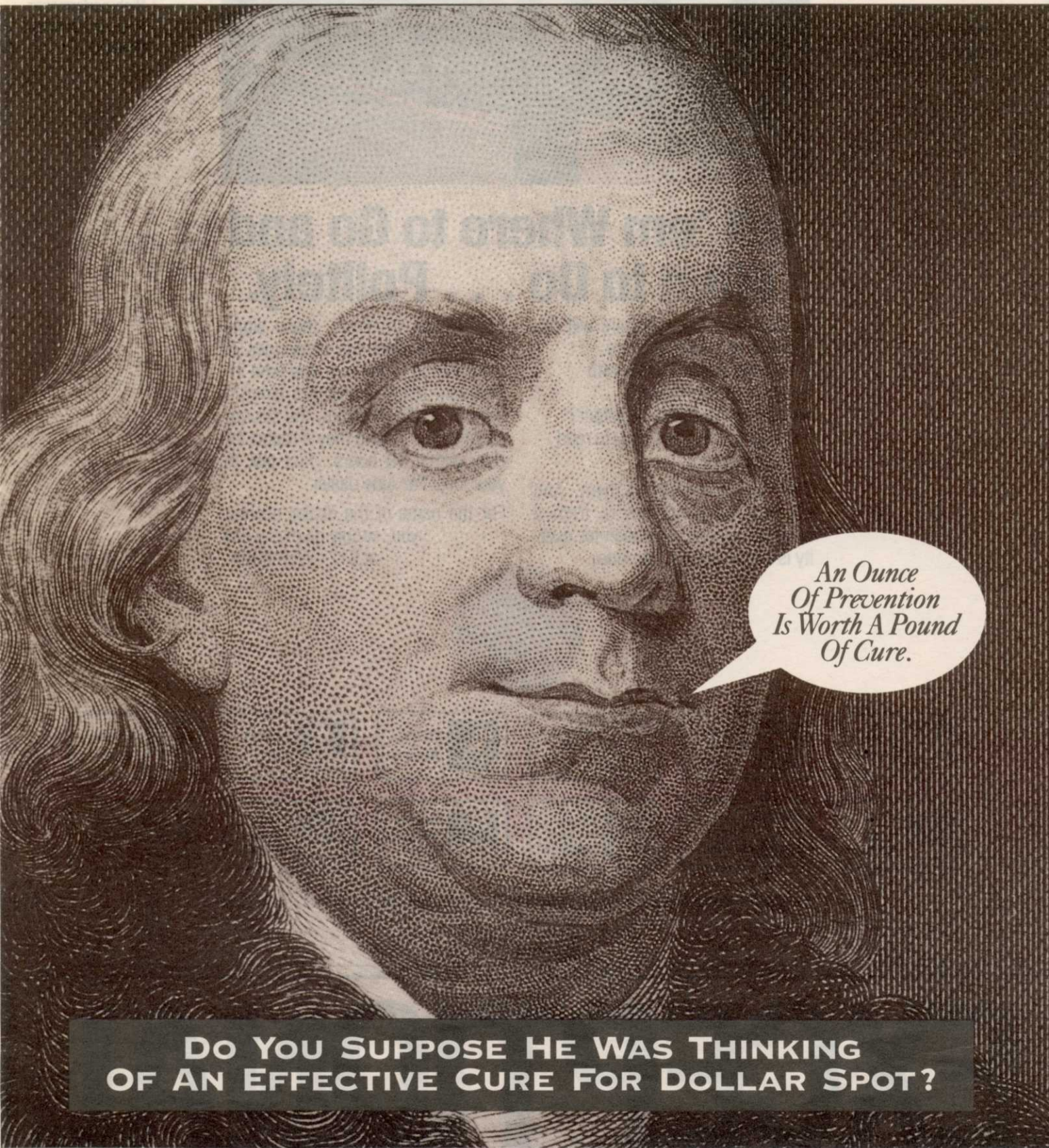
"I could say — and I do say — that superintendents die more frequently from lung cancer than the public at large," said Kross. "But we should not — we cannot — establish a causal relationship between cancer and pesticide application or exposure."

"It is also important to stress that these results cannot be interpreted to mean that golfers are at risk."

Kross and the researchers made several recommendations to the audience at the Dallas convention:

- Support smoking cessation programs and control exposure to secondary smoke by designating no-smoking areas (the GCSAA trade show floor was smoke-free for the first time in Dallas).
- Minimize exposure to pesticides by carefully following application label directions and using protective clothing.
- Further investigate the relationship between prolonged pesticide exposure and the development of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.
- Expand existing programs in pesticide application and training.

Kross said his team of researchers plans to publish the study in peer review journals, plus a future issue of *Golf Course Management*. They will also make further presentations at regional superintendent meetings.



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Of Cure.*

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