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MEMBERS SAY THE DARNEDEST THINGS

As folks engaged in the business of keeping golf courses healthy and looking good, we have control over everything except two factors: the weather and other people.

Weather we understand and are trained to deal with. But people? Every turf-education program should include a few classes in human psychology. How else to deal with the club committees, boards and membership? Most of them, in my experience, are nice and mean well, but they've also been known to check their brains at the clubhouse door.

Knowing that most of the country's clubs are getting ready to open again and we can all use a good laugh, what follows are honest-to-goodness, real-life questions and statements to superintendents. I called a few friends for these and they had no problems responding.

I swear all of these are true. I hope they provide a chuckle and make you realize you are not alone.

NEW YORK STATE OF MIND. I understand replacing club flags with American flags on the Fourth of July. But at one club the superintendent was asked to convert the bridge across a par-three pond into the Brooklyn Bridge, complete with ferries and tug boats in the water. He also was asked to paint one golf cart yellow like a New York City taxicab to shuttle members across the bridge while Frank Sinatra blared from speakers.

ON THE ROCKS. Experiencing the worst drought in West Coast history, one superintendent was preparing for a major event when an ingenious member – who happened to own a shipping company – offered to take a couple of his tug boats up to Alaska and tow back several icebergs that could be melted for the necessary water.

TRUE GRIT. During a particularly rainy spell, one course member asked the superintendent, “Do you think your staff could bring the sand from the bunkers inside at night so it could dry out?”

110 ON THE STIMPMETER. A superintendent in the Midwest told me that while enduring relentless 100-degree days, his club president approached him concerned about membership safety. Seems he had been told that in times of excessively high heat it wasn't unusual for greens to blow up. Yes, actually explode when the earth overheated.

HIGH-SALT DIET. Having lost a saltwater marsh to fresh water, the president of one coastal club asked the superintendent if there was any way to return the feature to its previous state. Told it was impossible, the president came back a few days later with his own

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suggestion: The super should go to the hardware store, buy large blocks of salt (the kind used for attracting deer), grind them in the big wood chipper, and spread the ground substance to “re-salt” the marsh.

YOU CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP. How many of these have you heard?

“What time is the 9 o'clock shotgun tomorrow?”

“My member-guest partner packed in a hurry but forgot to bring any underwear. Could you go to the mall and pick up some for him? He's a size 40.”

“We know there's a no-cell-phone policy at the club, but we also know the club provides you one. Can we use it to order lunch and call our offices?”

You are standing in an 8-foot-deep hole filled with water, covered with mud and soaking wet: “Hey Bill, you fixing a leak?”

“I read somewhere there is a statistical relationship between agricultural chemicals and breast cancer. So please don't spray on ladies day. Spray only when the men are playing and on outing days.”

“Can you get some of those softer flagpoles so when our balls strike the pin they don't ricochet so far from the hole?”

“I have a great idea for our holiday tournaments and closest-to-the-hole contests. On the greens you should paint a red heart for Valentine's Day, a colored egg for Easter, a shamrock for St. Patrick's Day, and a wreath for the Christmas tournament!”

What's is the most ridiculous request you've heard? Send your best MMMMs – most memorable member misstatements – to my blog, www.aspire-golf.com/buzz.html.

We'll share them and all have a good laugh – or cry. **GCI**