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(DISEASE continued from page 33)

knowing what the past has held when looking to the future.

“It’s hard to predict what activity is coming our way, even with the advances we’ve made as an industry and the technology we have to help predict weather patterns based off of past trends,” Stevens says. “The best we can do is to continue to educate and coach our teams to become the best at monitoring conditions and producing the best products they can in preparation for what nature brings.

“With the changing weather patterns we’ve seen in the Southeast over the past 10 years, there is no ‘normal’ anymore,” he adds. “I think we’ve seen that with the introduction of pink

snow mold in Florida.”

Considering the rate of success experienced this year, Abbott’s team isn’t likely to change its strategy heading into the 2014 season.

“Leaf spot and dollar spot were very active in the spring of 2013, so most of the superintendents will be looking and spraying preventatively for them as we warm up in the spring of 2014,” he says.

McBrayer, who has been at Pearl River Resort for 15 years, is doing his due diligence as he looks to the past to predict the future.

“We experienced a fair amount of dollar spot in the Bermudagrass roughs last spring,

so I would anticipate having to fertilize roughs and fairways a little earlier in the season,” he says. “I also anticipate treating for zoysia patch in the spring again, especially if it is going to be wet.

“I’m talking to other superintendents and studying up on new products before I pull the trigger on new treatments,” McBrayer adds.

As for depending on the accuracy of long-range forecasts for the upcoming winter ... Abbott isn’t convinced.

“I read the Farmers’ Almanac every fall and am an avid follower of the Weather Channel,” he says. “I don’t really rely on the long-range forecast, but am

always paying attention to see what the meteorologists think it might be like.”

The volatility and unpredictability of the weather has Stevens paying attention to the overview provided by local TV weathermen, but seeking greater detailed information.

“We lean heavily on weather forecasts to help us plan our operations,” he says. “Unfortunately, it’s not an exact science, but it’s a crucial part of our operations. We base much of our applications around humidity/moisture levels, soil temps, ambient air temps and extreme weather swings, so even though it’s a moving target, it’s the best we have, so we rely on it and stay abreast of any last-minute changes to adjust accordingly.”

Likewise for McBrayer. “I’m not sure that anyone can put much stock in long-range forecasts,” he says. “I will hope for the best and prepare for the worst.” GCI

Rob Thomas is a Cleveland-based writer and frequent GCI contributor.

“Our guys have been extremely proactive with their cultural practices and **focused on basic plant health** throughout the summer. With record rainfalls over the spring and mid-summer, they’ve worked hard to keep the canopy open to encourage the necessary gas exchange needed to survive such saturated conditions.”

– Mike Stevens, Billy Casper Golf



Many supers will be on the lookout for outbreaks of leaf spot, fusarium and spring dead spot (pictured) this winter.

PHOTO (LEFT): KEVIN MATHIAS, BUGWOOD.ORG
PHOTO (RIGHT): MARY ANN HANSEN, VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY, BUGWOOD.ORG

SUREGUARD® HERBICIDE: OUTSTANDING POA CONTROL IN DORMANT BERMUDAGRASS

SureGuard® HERBICIDE

When Damon Dean rooted around in his Bermudagrass roughs, looking for any sign of surviving *Poa annua* after a fall application of SureGuard® Herbicide, he came up happily empty.

"You dig down in there and you can't find any *Poa*, and that's awesome," said Dean, the superintendent at Keith Hills Golf Club in Buies Creek, N.C. "SureGuard is the only one I know of that has that ability—giving you postemergence control—and I think that's awesome."

SureGuard provides turf professionals with fast-acting postemergence and season-long preemergence control of *Poa annua* in a single application when applied to dormant Bermudagrass in the fall (typically November–December). SureGuard also delivers consistent postemergence and long-lasting residual control of winter annual broadleaf weeds such as chickweed and henbit.

"SureGuard has a unique fit for fall treatments after *Poa annua* has germinated, providing postemergence control as well as season-long preemergence control," said Dr. Jason Fausey, regional field development manager for Valent Professional Products. "No other product can be applied once and work this well on *Poa*."

Flexibility of application

SureGuard has low water solubility and binds tightly to the soil. And, unlike many other preemergence herbicides, SureGuard does not inhibit root growth. This can help turf recover from winter injury and spring dead spot damage. Plus, SureGuard will not delay spring Bermudagrass green-up.

For optimum postemergence control, SureGuard should be applied when *Poa annua* is young and actively growing during Bermudagrass dormancy.

"If you put out SureGuard at dormancy, you don't have those ragged weeds popping up and making things look bad. You get a smoother transition," said Dr. Bert McCarty, professor of horticulture at Clemson University. "People don't mind Bermudagrass going dormant as long as it's not full of weeds. SureGuard helps ease that going into winter."

New mode of action

SureGuard also provides a novel mode of action that supports resistance management strategies for *Poa annua* and other tough, glyphosate- and ALS-resistant weeds.

"SureGuard fills a need," McCarty said. "It provides good *Poa annua* control in the fall... and it's a pretty versatile material that gives us another rotational option to help with resistance issues."

Making quick work of *Poa*

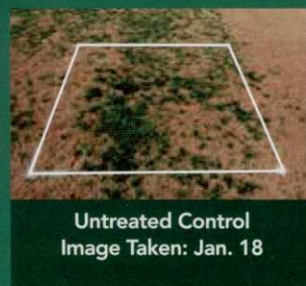
Despite generally cooler temperatures in late fall, SureGuard performed well in McCarty's trials when applied at a rate of 12 oz/A.

"SureGuard is a lot quicker-acting than existing products, which slow down when it cools off," McCarty said. "SureGuard seems able to do its thing regardless of the temperature or the weather. You start seeing activity within hours instead of days."

At Keith Hills, the home course for Campbell University golf, Dean remains impressed with the results delivered by SureGuard.

"It was clean," he said of his roughs. "I plan on using SureGuard again, that's for sure."

For more information on SureGuard, contact your Valent territory manager or visit www.valentpro.com/sureguard.



SureGuard provides excellent control of *Poa annua* when applied to dormant Bermudagrass in the late fall.

Source: Dr. Scott McElroy, Auburn University.



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Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, is president of Golf Agronomy International. He's a 41-year, life member of the GCSAA. He can be reached at 757-561-7777 or terrybuchen@earthlink.net.

SUREG

Travels With Terry

Globetrotting consulting agronomist Terry Buchen visits many golf courses annually with his digital camera in hand. He shares helpful ideas relating to maintenance equipment from the golf course superintendents he visits – as well as a few ideas of his own – with timely photos and captions that explore the changing world of golf course management.

TURF VEHICLE BLOWER



This 2011 Billy Goat 18-hp push-type blower produces approximately 3,700 cfm with a wind speed of 180 mph that originally cost about \$2,700. An Ultra Tow 12-inch Long Category III Trailer Hitch Receiver, with an Ultra Tow 5-inch wide by 7-1/4 inch plate, is mounted underneath the center of the bumper of the 2013 Club Car Turf 2 (approximately \$9,800 including the materials). The blower has a 2-inch male Category III hitch assembly

that is held in place to the turf vehicle with one turnbuckle on either side of the bracket after the wheels are removed. The operator uses the throttle on the blower handle and there is an optional electric toggle switch to rotate the shroud. It took about four hours to build. Brian Goleski, golf course superintendent, and J.R. Wilson, equipment manager, from the Noyac Golf Club in Sag Harbor, Long Island, N.Y., were the design and build team.

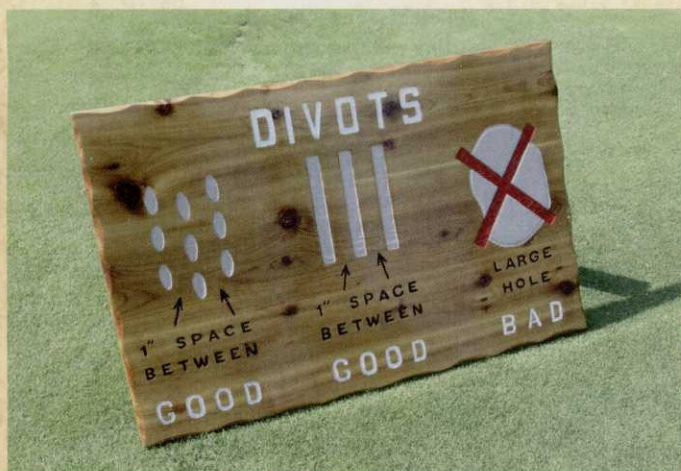
GREENS FAN TRAILER

This 50-inch 7.5-hp Precision Premium/Platinum Series Green's Fan (approximately \$8,000) is mounted on a homemade 52-inch by 52-inch trailer that was built using 30 feet of 2-inch by 2-inch square metal tubing 1/16-inch thick; C-channel 50-inch long that is 1-inch by 4-inch by 1-inch axel kit with leaf springs, two turf tires, four swiveling trailer jacks, and one 2-inch trailer hitch. The wheels are removed so that the fan can be angled toward the green's surface properly with the trailer jacks and to prevent turf loss underneath them. The leaf springs were installed to make it safer when going up steep terrain because the fans are top-heavy. At the time the trailers were built, there were no specific commercially available trailers. Brian Goleski, golf course superintendent, and J.R. Wilson, equipment manager, from the Noyac Golf Club in Sag Harbor, Long Island, N.Y., designed and built the trailers, which took about four hours to build using a "jig" at a cost of about \$950 each.



PRACTICE TEE DIVOT SIGN:

Explaining to golfers the proper way to take divots on a practice tee has always been a challenge for turf managers. This decorative sign was built using 2-inch-by-8-inch cedar planks glued together. The planks were then sanded with 80-, 120- and finally 220-grit sandpaper. The lettering was done with stencils and freehand marked with a pencil. A Dremel tool was used for the engraving. Two coats of enamel paint were used to color-in the wording and diagrams. Finally, the entire sign was varnished to protect it from the elements. The total cost for materials was about \$100 and it took about 24 hours to build it. Rick Bowden, superintendent, designed their own version of the sign after seeing a photo of one at Hawthorn Woods Country Club, Hawthorn Woods, Ill. And John Minorini, groundsman, built the sign at the Bob O'Link Golf Club in Highland Park, Ill.



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(MORAGHAN continued from page 34)

They do. But only when they know what they're talking about and have first made an effort to understand the situation, talk to the superintendent, and ask intelligent questions.

Because as I said above, the golfer is just as responsible for a course's condition as the superintendent is. (Among the best things you can do is help others in your group understand their effect on the course and take better care of it.)

Finally, please thank your superintendent every once in a while for the terrific job he or she is doing under difficult, and constantly changing, conditions. Say hello, strike up a conversation, and you never know what you might learn. You might even get some helpful tips for that backyard garden you have at home.

Enjoy your game, enjoy your course,

Tim Moraghan
 Principal
 ASPIRE Golf GCI

(KAMINSKI continued from page 46)

statements and my Green Section article, the demand far exceeds the supply.

So what's the solution?

I'm not even sure what the problem is to be honest, so it's hard to come up with a solution. I tend to focus more on what it takes for students to reach that highest and often unattainable goal rather than the title of their first position following graduation. My focus with students in the 2-year program is about setting and understanding goals.

Often falling on deaf ears, I try to explain how sacrificing titles and even financial gain early in their career may be necessary to reach their career goal. We even have superintendents in as guest speakers who share their stories of personal and professional sacrifice that ultimately led them to their current position. The host of the recent U.S. Open at Merion comes to mind.


If there's no solution (and possibly no problem) then what's your point?

I guess I don't really have a point. My general feeling is that the market is still strong and that although the road to success is a long and difficult one, the cream will ultimately rise to the top. Those that don't have the intestinal fortitude will leave the business, making way for those that had the patience and luck to stick it out.

If we really want to help our early career (and future of the industry) professionals, perhaps titles should be reserved for positions that deserve titles. Giving new employees a false sense of leadership and position within the club through watered-down titles only continues to reinforce an entitled generation who grew up receiving a trophy just for showing up.

Success in this business is tough. Showing up isn't enough. GCI

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Pat Jones is editorial director and publisher of Golf Course Industry. He can be reached at pjones@gie.net or 216-236-5854.

REALITY CHECK

A new pipeline of understanding will lead to a more connected GCSAA.

I'm writing this from seat 5B inside a big metal bird blasting over the Rocky Mountains on my way back from the Peaks & Prairies GCSA annual conference and show in Billings, Mont. It was an awesome event, but also a reality check. Allow me to explain...

I've always loved the chance to participate in chapter events and regional conferences. I get to see old friends and make new ones and, unbelievably, I'm often given the chance to rant and rave about some industry topic for an hour. I've been giving the same speech for 25 years and, incredibly, no one has caught on. Go figure.

It's tougher and tougher for me to get to regional events as my job description has gotten broader, but I could not say no to the fabulous Lori Russell, the empress of the northwest chapters, when she asked me to meet with her board to talk about the evolution of chapter publications, websites, newsletters and social media.

I've had similar conversations with leaders from other chapters – big and small – and the short version is that it's really difficult for associations led by volunteers to come to grips with the new member communications model that's emerging. They all feel pressured right now by all sorts of factors (key members, sponsors, etc.) to abandon their printed publications and materials and go all digital.

I'll tell you what I told the Peaks & Prairies board: It needs to be a planned transition, not an overnight switch. You have to communicate across multiple platforms these days: print, website, email and social media. It's "cheaper" but harder and even more time-consuming than just killing trees and printing newsletters. If you're a chapter leader and you want to learn

more, give me a call and I'll be glad to dispense my usual free opinions about the issue.

This is daunting stuff for small association like Peaks & Prairies – and dozens more like it out there – but it's just the tip of the iceberg in terms of challenges faced by local associations these days. Here are the really big concerns:

- How can you establish (or re-establish) the value of local networking/education events in the minds of clubs and course owners? The recession shrunk or killed professional development budget lines at many facilities. How do you get those back?
- How can you engage younger members who don't necessarily understand the value of the chapter and who tend to network via texting and social media? The value of chapters can be enhanced by Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook, but it also makes it less important to attend meetings and interact in the minds of younger folk. Plus, who's going to pay for those younger guys to join and participate in chapters? And where will the next generation of leaders come from?
- How can you get butts in seats at chapter meetings and regional trade shows? Healthy attendance drives revenues but it's tough in an era of smaller budgets and a nagging perception that being away from the course for "fun" things like shows makes you vulnerable to criticism within your organization.
- How can you demonstrate the value of your association to sponsors who want metrics to validate the investment they make in your chapter? Remember that about 20 companies directly or indirectly fund about two-thirds of all the sponsorships, advertising and trade show participation in the entire industry. Their budgets are

gradually shrinking. How can you show them that your group still deserves a piece of that ever-shrinking pie?

Those are serious issues, many of which will require significant change in the way chapters have historically done business. It's going to be a long and difficult evolution to the new model. That's one reason I'm heartened to see the direction the GCSAA chapter outreach program and field staff program is taking. They've hired a good group of people for those regional positions. I know many of them and they are hard-working, passionate guys with a down-to-earth sense of the support they need to provide to the local associations and to individual members.

What's really cool about the field staff concept is it's a two-way conduit. In addition to the help they provide in the boonies, they do something else that's important: They communicate what's going on out in the real world back to GCSAA leadership in Lawrence.

I've always felt that the headquarters staff was pretty insular and disconnected from the "real world" of working superintendents and that too much of their effort was directed at the needs of the top 20 percent who serve on committees and come to the national show. My sense is that's changing thanks, in part, to some new voices on the board and the reality check provided by having staff out in the field every day.

I sincerely hope this new pipeline of understanding leads to a more pragmatic and connected GCSAA in the future. If it doesn't, we risk becoming more fragmented and having the chasm between the haves and the have nots grow wider. That would inevitably spell the end of the sense of fraternity that's always made this business special. Let's not let that happen as we rush toward the future. **GC**

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