

Shades Of Green

OPINION

It's was a warm fall this year at the Lake Omigosh Country Club here in central Florida. So warm in fact that Duffy McDuffy suggested to green committee members that they approve and support a decision to refrain from overseeding this year. Seems the local water management district is imposing extended watering restrictions because of the lack of rainfall, and further cutbacks might be coming.

It makes perfect sense to McDuffy. You can spend \$40,000 on seed, but if you don't have the water to help it germinate and establish, then you are just wasting money and precious water supplies. You could see the anguish on the committee members' faces as they thought of those dull brown and tan fairways without those luscious green stripes. There would be plenty of carping and complaining from the members as they left their brown or snow-covered Northern courses expecting to play the usual emerald-green oasis in Florida. Drought happens. Get over it.

Meanwhile, as McDuffy contemplates managing potentially dormant unoverseeded turf during the winter, he also faces budget shortages for pest-management programs, labor and the inherent challenge of ferreting out illegal immigrant paperwork, ongoing water restrictions and local noise and fertilizer-use ordinances. These are all things that affect the playing conditions of the golf course, the No. 1 asset of a golf club.

But Duffy would be selfish to think he is the only department head that is suffering from performance issues when it comes to customer satisfaction. Let's take a look at what's happening around the club.

After fast putting greens, the quickest way to a club member's heart is through his stomach. But head chef Francois Beauclaire is in a stew over the shortage of portobello and crimini mushrooms lately, which might force him to alter some of the menu's signature dishes. The *E. coli* scares in produce (green onions and spinach) were devastating for the light-lunch crowd. Beauclaire responded by paying more for imported veggies from Canada, although that source will freeze up this winter.

Budget Woes Force Clubs To Prioritize

BY JOEL JACKSON



SHOULD ORIENTAL
RUGS, TEAK ACCENTS
AND ITALIAN GLASS
OVERRULE GOLF
MAINTENANCE?

Head pro Harvey Doyle and his staff are in a panic. Their supplier of the signature "Lake Omigosh Blue" golf shirts is no longer using the manufacturer in China for fear that the pigment contains lead. His new supplier of blue fabric (made in the U.S.A.) just isn't the same. It's more of a cornflower blue. For an extra charge, the color can be matched with special dyes. Since Lake Omigosh Blue is the official color of the shirts for the men's inter-club golf team, The Fighting Cormorants, the expense has been authorized.

Mary Hartwell, the food & beverage manager, nearly swooned when she found out that the crystal stemware pattern used since the club opened was being discontinued. Fortunately, Mary was able to contract with an Italian glass factory in Florence to keep those wineglasses coming even if they were double the old cost.

Club manager Alistair Caldwell reported that the imported Oriental rugs were on order and scheduled to arrive the week after the replacement of the 2-year-old carpet, and the new Brazilian teak paneling installation was completed in the clubhouse.

Back down in the golf maintenance office, McDuffy was reading a memo from the finance committee that said his line-item request in the budget for a continuing \$1,000 turf research donation to the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association had been deleted to reduce the club's operating costs.

Sometimes it makes you wonder if folks who run golf clubs really do have their priorities in order once they leave the 18th green.

So long from Lake Omigosh where the superintendent is under budget, the crew is over worked, and many members are behind the times.

Certified superintendent Joel Jackson is executive director for the Florida GCSA.