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**The**  
**Andersons**

**Scotts**

**I**n case you haven't kept score at home, I'm pleased to inform you that this is the 20th issue of *Golfdom* since we brought the magazine back to life in January 1999. We still have a way to go to match the record of the "old" *Golfdom* (some 400-plus issues over 53 years), but after producing 20 magazines, it seems like a good time to consider what we've accomplished — and learned — over the past couple of years. Here's a half-dozen lessons I've taken away from this little experiment called *Golfdom*.

## Lesson 1: Sometimes a plan works

*Golfdom* represents one those rare times when a business plan actually worked. The original plan (written with a golf pencil on the back of a cocktail napkin) called for the magazine to be "fresh, upscale, easy to read, smart and entertaining." Thanks to a lot of talented writers and designers, combined with great feedback from you, we think we've achieved this goal. The plan also called for us to be profitable. Thanks to unbelievable support from advertisers, we're not only profitable, but we've become the number two magazine in the market. In short, *Golfdom* is here to stay.

## Lesson 2: Change is good

If nothing else, *Golfdom* has rocked the status quo. I'm particularly proud of our cover stories on PDI, management companies and the lack of ethnic diversity in the golf industry. Our goal in doing stories like these is to spur more self-examination and awareness in a business where people are often too busy to think about the big picture.

## Lesson 3: It's OK to have fun

Superintendents are some of the funniest people I know. It seems like humor is the pressure relief valve that keeps us from going postal (or, more appropriately, going "Spackler"). We've tried to use humor with a purpose — with mixed results. For example, I still get hassled about the infamous "Dumb and Dumber" column Geoff Shackelford wrote last year. At the same time, some superintendents request extra copies for their green committees. Go figure.

## Lesson 4: Listening works

We really do listen to what you, our readers,

# Twenty Issues, Six Lessons

BY PAT JONES



IF NOTHING ELSE,  
*GOLFDOM* HAS  
ROCKED THE  
STATUS QUO

have to say, and we actively encourage feedback by publishing a lot of the letters we get. As a result, we get more e-mail, notes and calls than any other magazine in our company (which publishes about 70 other magazines). We also rely on in-depth monthly feedback from our *Golfdom* Advisory Staff, a group of more than 20 superintendents, architects and others who review each issue and help us plan articles.

## Lesson 5: Nobody's perfect

To paraphrase Mr. Sinatra ... mistakes, we've made a few. Although we've been relatively lucky about errors, we always correct them prominently. In fact, here's one now: Newt Gingrich does not have a Ph.D. in environmental sciences as I glibly stated in my September column. He has a Ph.D. in history. I stand corrected, but I also stand by my assertion that EPA has exceeded the Congressional intent of the Food Quality Protection Act and needs to be reined in by somebody, if not Gingrich. We simply don't know if this will come to pass.

## Lesson 6: Expectation and reality

Occasionally, you actually achieve your dreams. For me, the reality of *Golfdom* has exceeded my wildest expectations. Not only are we a successful business venture, but we've engaged you, the reader, in a way that I never expected. It's a thrill to meet superintendents and have them tell me that they love the magazine. Not like. Not appreciate. Love. Well, at the risk of being all warm and gooey, let me return the favor. We love what we're doing. We love this industry. And we love our readers right back. With a little luck, the lovefest will continue for many years to come.

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*Pat Jones is the publisher/editorial director of Golfdom. He can be reached at 440-891-3126 or [pjones@advanstar.com](mailto:pjones@advanstar.com)*

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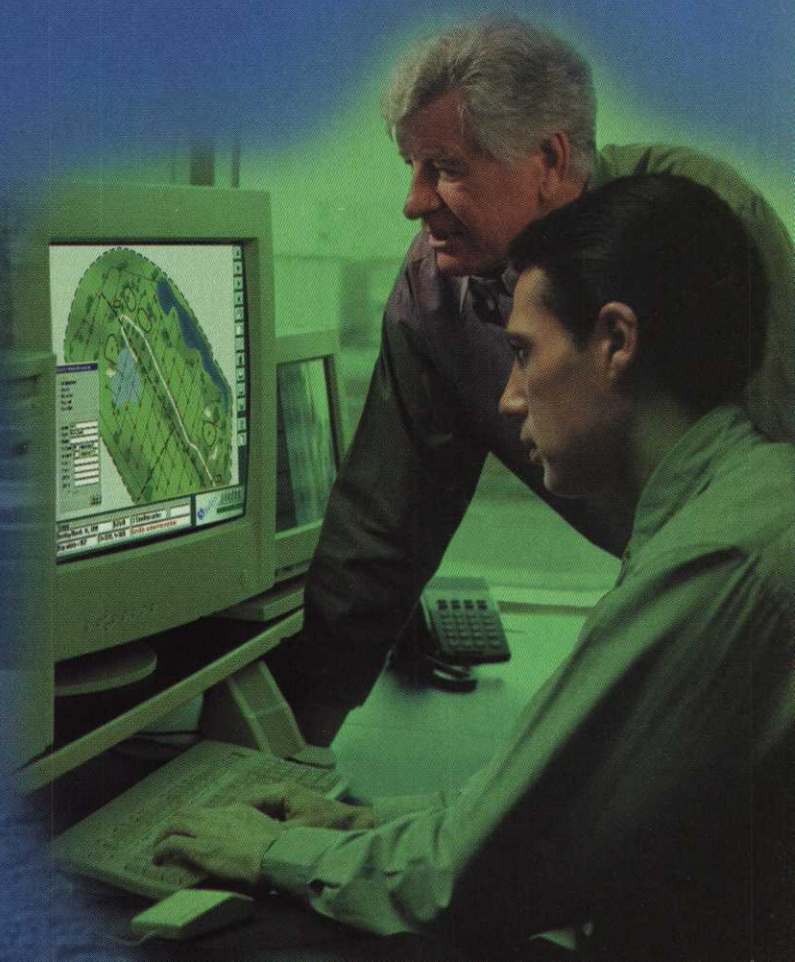
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**W**ith a hearty ho ho ho, I'm proud to announce that I'm finished with my Christmas shopping — and it's not

Dec. 24. So, please, gather around my big, red bag. It's time to pass out the goods.

**To golfers:** A big box of common sense to remind them to repair ballmarks and divots, and act responsibly while on the golf course.

**To superintendents:** A big box of tolerance to deal with the golfers who *don't* have the common sense to repair ballmarks and divots, and act responsibly while on the golf course. Remember, take a deep breath and count to 10 before "chatting" with them.

**To superintendents:** A scorecard to keep up with all the mergers, acquisitions and bankruptcies among equipment, seed and chemical suppliers. Who's on first?

**To fungicide manufacturers:** All the knowledge in the world to create a concoction to conquer gray leaf spot.

**To insecticide manufacturers:** All the knowledge in the world to create a concoction to conquer grubs and mole crickets — so they never return.

**To Mark Wilson, CGCS of Valhalla GC and poster boy of a recent Tee-2-Green advertisement in industry magazines:** A new pair of no-wrinkle slacks to wear while he's modeling for his next photo shoot. Mark, you have to don your Sunday best for these gigs and show the world that superintendents are *GQ* — and *never* wear jeans, like GCSAA says.

**To the GCSAA powers that be (publishing division):** Red, green and yellow crayons to go with the brown crayon they used to color Mark Wilson's blue jeans to make him appear more professional in the Tee-2-Green ad that appeared in *Golf Course Management*. Also to the publishing division's honchos: A prescription of anti-pious pills to help them lighten up.

**To the GCSAA powers that be (career development division):** A truckload of paper towels to wash the egg off their faces if PDI is voted down.

**To Al Jansen, superintendent of Baraboo CC in Baraboo, Wis.:** A new computer

## To You, From Me, Happy Holidays

BY LARRY AYLWARD



TO GOLFERS: A BIG  
BOX OF COMMON  
SENSE TO  
REMEMBER TO  
REPAIR BALLMARKS  
AND DIVOTS

equipped with high-speed DSL Internet access. Then the chat-room king can log onto the GCSAA Web site and post his messages with the utmost in speed and precision.

**To each superintendent hosting a Major in 2001:** A steady supply of No-Doz, Pepto Bismol and Stress Tabs to get through it, and a case of Heineken to celebrate each event when it's over.

**To Texas superintendents, who endured the drastic drought of 2000:** A normal summer in 2001 with sufficient rain.

**To golf course mechanics:** More recognition because you are highly underrated.

**To assistant superintendents:** More patience because your time will come.

**To the women in this male-dominated industry:** Continued moxie and grit. You go girls!

**To David Fay, USGA chairman:** Seven new bow ties, one for each day of the week.

**To Kevin Smith, Mark Clark and other Arizona superintendents:** A Santa Claus-sized salute for donating their time and muscle to build a playing field for youth living on an Indian reservation in the Arizona desert.

**To kids and beginning golfers:** Smaller and less-intimidating courses where they can learn the game and its nuances.

**To Tiger Woods:** All I can say is my gift isn't an endorsement contract.

**To David Duval and Phil Mickelson:** A Major title for each.

**To Jack Nicklaus:** One more appearance in one more Major.

**To the good golfers:** More birdies.

**To the bad golfers:** More pars.

**To all of our readers:** Peace and goodwill.

*Larry Aylward, editor of Golfdom, is begging Santa for more pars. He can be reached at 440-891-2770 or laylward@advanstar.com.*

Here's some

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# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### Flint sale clears way For Novartis-Zeneca merger

Novartis Agribusiness sold its worldwide Flint business to Bayer Crop Protection, a subsidiary of Bayer AG, for about \$760 million. At press time, the sale opened the door for the proposed merger of Novartis Agribusiness and Zeneca Agrochemicals to form Syngenta AG, which was approved by European anti-trust authorities but was still subject to U.S. approval from the Federal Trade Commission.

Sale of the Flint fungicide line, manufactured in Switzerland, addresses an area of concern for the European commission and the FTC for the merger. "In finding a responsible buyer for our Flint products, Novartis Agribusiness has managed to maintain jobs in Switzerland, while fulfilling a condition of the merger," said Heinz Imhof, head of Novartis Agribusiness.

According to a recent report, Greensboro, N.C., will be the home for Syngenta AG's North American crop protection division. Delaware will be the site of the company's smaller U.S. corporate headquarters.

### Golf Trust to sell or liquidate

Charleston, S.C.-based Golf Trust of America, a top U.S. golf course owner, announced in September that its board of directors will sell the company or liquidate its assets, including 47 courses in 17 states.

In February, the company retained Banc of America Securities LLC as its financial advisor to assist the board in a review of strategic alternatives and to contact potential investors/acquirers. As a result of information gathered in this process, the board concluded that it's the company's best interest to sell or liquidate.

*Briefs continue on page 18*

## Daddy's Little Girl

SUPERINTENDENT WINS AWARD THANKS TO DAUGHTER'S INSPIRATION



WILL WALDRON

**P**at Blum didn't create his environmentally friendly maintenance program for recognition. He did it for a more personal reason — his 5-year-old daughter, Samantha.

"I didn't want people to point fingers at her when I was dead and gone and say, 'Your Daddy polluted the environment,'" says Blum, superintendent of Colonial Acres GC in Glenmont, N.Y. "The world doesn't really need golf courses, so if we're going to exist we might as well do it right."

Whether he craved publicity or not, Blum received recognition recently for his efforts — from none other than New York Governor George Pataki. His efforts at managing the environment at the course won Colonial Acres a Governor's Award for Pollution Pre-

vention in the small business category. Blum's 9-hole, executive course is the first golf course to win the award, which has existed since 1994. Colonial Acres has also been an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary since 1998.

Pataki rewards companies annually that use pollution prevention strategies that exceed the legal requirements of environmental protection and successfully reduce or eliminate the generation of pollution at the source. There can be 10 winners or one. This year, there were five winners in four categories.

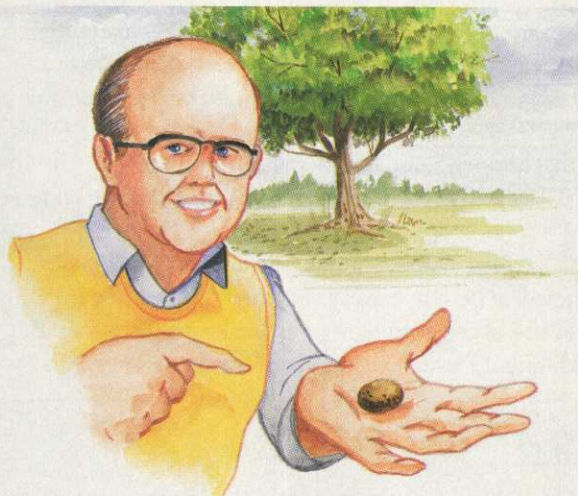
"People had been telling me for a couple of years that I should apply for the award, so I finally did," Blum says.

*Continued on page 18*

# Nutty Professor

TURF SCIENTIST HAS A PLAN TO BATTLE HUNGER

Professor Reed Funk is going nuts — but the world may be a better place for it. Funk, the Cook College/Rutgers University turf scientist who developed Manhattan perennial ryegrass and Rebel tall fescue, is lobbying to increase the world's supply of nuts to battle hunger problems at home and abroad. Funk is researching the issue and developing contacts in Asia for further development.



DAN ZOLA

"It's possible and likely that future generations will need more food," Funk says. "Therefore, we will need to substantially increase world food production."

The world is dependent on only a few major crops, including wheat, rice, corn, soybeans and barley, and needs to expand its selection, Funk says. "We need to develop a greater diversity of species," he adds.

That includes nutritious and palatable nuts, such as pecans, hazelnuts and chestnuts. "There are opportunities for substantial genetic improvement for a number of these underutilized crops," he adds.

In time, Funk says that nut species can be genetically improved to grow anywhere, despite their lineage. He points out that corn originally adapted in southern Mexico, but was growing throughout the New World when Columbus discovered America.

Funk stresses that the world will need more food because population is expected to increase by 3 billion in the next 50 years. He says nut trees can grow in rocky and steep areas where other crops, such as wheat, can't be planted.

"Many tree crops have been neglected, but we have the building blocks to do this," he says. "The genetic improvement of underutilized food crops is a win-win situation."

— Larry Aylward

## Quotable

**"The threat of losing your job causes more stress than you can imagine. And the threat is real. There's always a small group of people in every club that's clamoring for a guy's head."**

— Frank Dobie, superintendent and general manager of Sharon GC in Sharon Center, Ohio, on job security.

**"You get a free air show with every round."**

— Certified golf course superintendent Dennis Lyon commenting on the jets from a nearby base that frequently fly over Murphy Creek in Aurora, Colo.

**"We've all come to a point in our lives where we've been tested and hit adversity. And in golf there is no better sport to describe the equation of life. It's just you and a ball and nature; you against yourself."**

— Robert Redford, director of "The Legend of Bagger Vance," explains his metaphor for life (*The Cleveland Plain Dealer*).

**"Grandpa lived the evolution of golf architecture. He went from mules and pull scrapers in his early days to big earth movers, from basic watering to multi-million-dollar irrigation systems, and from fescue greens to improved varieties of bentgrass."**

— Golf course architect W. Bruce Matthews III, reflecting on the career of his grandfather, W. Bruce Matthews, a well-known Michigan architect who died in September at 96.

## Business briefs

*Briefs continued from page 16*

### **Lesco earnings down**

Rocky River, Ohio-based Lesco said that revenues for the third quarter increased 6.6 percent to a record \$139.6 million compared with \$130.9 over the same period last year. However, earnings were \$4.2 million compared with \$5.8 million for 1999's third quarter. Impacting the third quarter were \$315,000 of non-recurring costs associated with an acquisition that was not completed. Lesco also said a drought in the South, unusually cool and wet weather in the North, and production inefficiencies at the plant that produces Novex, its new "smart" fertilizer, negatively impacted both earnings and sales growth.

In another matter, Lesco acquired assets of Southern Golf Products. Lesco was the exclusive distributor for Southern Golf Products since February 1999.

### **Monterey tops list**

Six U.S. markets are in the top 10 of a *Golf Digest* magazine reader's poll of the 50 best golf destinations in the world. Monterey, Calif., home of Pebble Beach Corp., is No. 1. Pinehurst, N.C., is No. 3; Sheboygan, Wis., No. 7; Scottsdale, Ariz., No. 8; Myrtle Beach, S.C., No. 9; and Hilton Head, S.C., No. 10.

### **Bank changes financing structure**

Charlotte-based Bank of America has discontinued its Golf and Marina Finance Group but rolled the division into a larger commercial finance operation.

### **KLAK buys Family Golf**

KLAK Golf has closed on its sale of Family Golf for \$16.15 million. KLAK Golf is a joint venture among Lubert-Adler Real Estate Opportunity Fund, Klaff Realty L.P. and KemperSports Management.

KLAK spokesman Steve Lesnik, who is also KemperSports CEO, said 20 of the properties acquired from Family Golf have been turned over to AllGolf, a new KemperSports subsidiary formed to manage mid-market driving ranges and entertainment centers, golf practice facilities, and affordable executive and nine-hole golf courses.

# 'They Were Jumping Up And Down And Freakin' Out'

## A MILLION BUCKS WILL DO THAT TO YOU

Russ Kelly will continue as club manager for Bent Pine GC in Vero Beach, Fla. He's not going to let a meager million bucks change his life.

"I'm not gonna make any changes now," says Kelly, who along with 25 employees at Bent Pine won the \$65 million Florida lottery in July.

The 26 employees, including two pros and a golf course maintenance worker, kicked in money to purchase 56 tickets for the lottery. Because the jackpot was higher than normal, the group bought more tickets than usual. One of the tickets, the only one in Florida, had the correct six numbers to claim the jackpot, which amounts to about \$1 million for each worker after taxes. Many of the winners were on the club's food and beverage staff.

"I wasn't at work the day they found out they won, but from what I understand it was mayhem," Kelly says. "They were jumping up and down and freakin' out."

The 34-year-old Kelly plans to invest most of the money, although he's building a swimming pool at his home. Kelly also has to help rebuild the Bent Pine staff because about 12 of the winning workers are leaving their jobs. But the millionaire isn't whining. "I have no complaints," he says.

## Daddy's Girl

*Continued from page 16*

"They put us in the small business category because they weren't sure where to put a golf course."

Blum says he uses a few vegetable-based hydraulic oils and category 3 synthetic pesticides, which are the least toxic synthetic products available. Even with those concessions to the environmentalists, Blum says he keeps his course in above-average condition.

Award applicants submit to a grueling process that starts with filling out a form detailing what measures were taken to reduce pollution and how much pollution has been reduced. The form is submitted to the Department of Energy Conservation's Compliance Counsel and the governor's staff, who narrow the applicants to the top 10. Then two members of the selection committee visit each finalist and make their recommendations to the governor, who picks the winners.

Blum said the awards dinner, where he brought the house down

when he told them the inspiration for his program, was intimidating.

"Here I am, the only turf guy there and the only representative from Colonial, amid these huge entouragees from these other companies," Blum says. "All the major environmental groups were there — and then I had to get up and give a speech."

He must have done something right because one of the governor's committee members pulled him aside and insisted that Blum enter Colonial again next year.

"I'm certainly going to consider it," Blum says. "We enjoy being touted as an environmental golf course."

And Blum still takes inspiration from Samantha whenever she visits the course.

"She's out here just about every day and I think about how my work affects her," Blum says. "Doing what we did here is definitely for her and the future."

— Frank H. Andorka Jr.



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# Scanning the Web

Frank Andorka reviews online golf games

I have come to love golf as much as the next addict. But when there's 10 feet of snow on the ground in Cleveland, even I eschew going outside (preferring instead to sit in front of a roaring fire sipping Bailey's Irish Cream). When I need a golf fix, however, I turn to free online golf games to get me through the winter. If you're looking to play free virtual golf, here are some sites you should visit (all sites start with <http://> unless otherwise noted):

\*\*\*\*\* — **Bookmark it and return frequently;**

\* — **Look at only if absolutely necessary**

\*\*\*\*\*[arcade.si.cnn.com/cnnsi\\_swgolf/public/home.html](http://arcade.si.cnn.com/cnnsi_swgolf/public/home.html) — CENSI Country Club provides nine holes of challenging golf that force you to hit every club in your bag. The graphics are realistic, down to the spray of sand when hitting out of bunkers and the wind that wreaks havoc with your shots. The controls are instinctual,



making it easy to learn and fun to play. Interestingly, par 3s are the hardest holes on the course to play.

\*\*\*[games.espn.go.com](http://games.espn.go.com) — This is a registration-only site. If you're looking for arcade action, this game suits your needs. You receive a bucket of 25 balls which you to hit at greens located on the driving range. You get points for each green you hit. It's not nearly as entertaining as playing an entire course, but it's an OK diversion.

\*\*\*\*[www.candystand.com/golf/default.htm](http://www.candystand.com/golf/default.htm) — Looking for something a little different? Try this site, which offers three different golf games, including two miniature golf courses. Trust me, it's not as easy as it looks.

*Scanning the Web is compiled by Frank H. Andorka Jr., Golfdom's associate editor, whose online golf game is no better than his real-life one. You can reach him at [fandorka@advanstar.com](mailto:fandorka@advanstar.com) with column suggestions.*

# Battling Bureaucracy

**Y**ou think convincing your members to pony up money for new equipment is tough? Try selling an equipment purchase to government bureaucrats, and you'll realize how easy you have it.

John Fink tends two nine-hole public courses, Sligo Creek GC and White Oak GC, for the Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission. He says buying equipment for the courses is burdened by paperwork and bureaucracy.

"Since I'm spending taxpayer money, everything has to go out for bids," Fink says. "I can't just go to an equipment manufacturer and purchase the product I want. It has to be approved by the commission."

Fink took the job in June 1999 after working at private clubs for most of his career. He knew working for the government would challenge him.

"You learn quickly that working for a government agency takes a lot more planning," Fink says. "I lost \$70,000 out of my equipment budget last year because I didn't file my bids on time. I won't make that mistake again this year."

If he has an exact piece of equipment in mind, Fink says he asks his sales representative for the exact product specifications so he can submit them with his funding request. It narrows the field considerably and, if everything goes as planned, Fink can get the brand he wants at the price he wants.

Unless there is a compelling reason to purchase another brand, however, Fink is obligated by law to take the lowest bidder for the equipment. That's why submitting manufacturer specifications — down to such items as seat-cover color and tire width — is so vital to the process.

Once his request is submitted, it usually takes two weeks for the commission to respond with the bids. If Fink does not want to purchase the equipment from the lowest bidder, he can send a letter to the board explaining why, which usually involves showing that it doesn't meet the specifications he set out in his submission.

As you might imagine, the process takes time. Fink recently purchased a skid steer loader and it took him three months to receive it — two months for approval and a month for delivery. Meanwhile, the players at White Oaks complained about the 60 tons of bunker sand that sat in the parking lot over the winter because the course didn't have the loader necessary to move it. Fink says he understood their irritation, but he couldn't move the process any faster.

"I didn't realize the purchasing process was going to be as involved as it turned out," Fink says. "As with any government job, there's reams of paper involved. There's good job security with my position, however, and it gives me more time to spend with my family. It has its advantages."

Just don't expect a quick turnaround on purchases any time soon.

— Frank H. Andorka Jr.



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