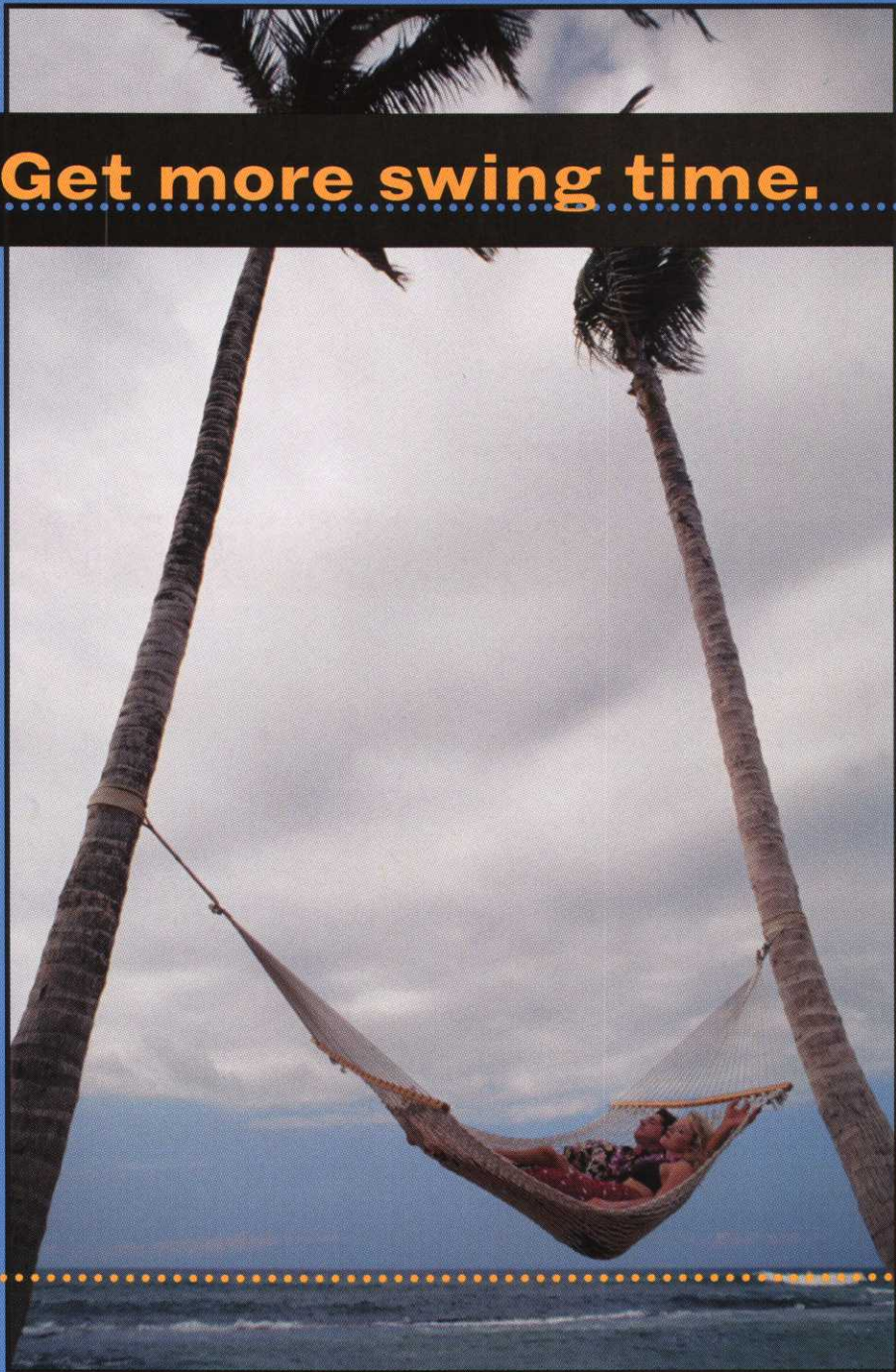


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Golfdom

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Going for the Green



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Here's what superintendents must know if they want their compensation to measure up to the pros.

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Weapons of War

A new system prepares superintendents to battle disease outbreaks, but scientists seek further scrutiny.

By Frank H. Andorka Jr.

About the cover

It was a windy day on the golf course, but we were still going for the green. With the help of Cleveland photographer, Jerry Mann, and the Photoshop skills of our art director, Lisa Lehman, we found Ben Franklin on hole No. 7.

News with a hook

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Going Postal

■ WE'VE GOT MAIL

Minorities and golf

I read the "Winds of Change" story (August) with great interest. Minority and youth advancement in golf is a particular interest of ours. We have been promoting minority golf in our own small way for almost a decade. We are in the midst of constructing three urban golf practice centers exclusively for Chicago youth. Mayor Daley, an occasional golfer, has provided great leadership.

The three practice centers, designed by Kemper Sports, will enable urban youth to practice their entire games — driving, pitching, chipping, sand play, putting — with instruction at no charge throughout the golf season. The capital cost of the three facilities will be around \$3 million.

We also have a scholarship program in Chicago where we offer courses over about 10 weeks conducted by Kemper Sports professionals in shop operations, agronomy and play, and the best students receive \$1,000 educational scholarships and first rights to future job openings in our company. It's an effort to bring more minorities into the business.

**Steve Lesnik, CEO
KemperSports Management
Northbrook, Ill.**

About that column

Your September Flagstick column, "Just Say No To Al, Carol and Joe," was particularly disturbing to me. Words such as "shove it," "sleazy stuff," "wacky" and referencing the IQ of a presidential candidate serve little purpose other than to drag the writer and reader down to a level of political dialogue that is simplified and amateurish.

Additionally, some terms and phrases, taken in or out of context, could be used in exactly the opposite manner in which they were intended. A perfect example

is where you offer a motto for a Newt Gingrich-led EPA, in which is included, "... Hello DDT." DDT is not a term that should be used, jokingly or not, when referring to modern golf course maintenance. It only provides another tool for those who really would restrict a golf course or agricultural industry's use of chemicals.

The environmental perspective that you provided was ill-timed, old-fashioned and not in keeping with modern golf course maintenance practices. The phrase, "... those who rely on pesticides to do their jobs," in referencing those in the industry could easily be used as fodder for ill-informed critics who would like to restrict chemical and pesticide use.

The holistic view that the GCSAA has worked hard to promote in working with environmental concerns would much better serve the argument. An integrated pest management program, utilizing a mix of cultural and environmental practices with a limited but cautious pesticide program, serves the purpose much better.

I welcome the opinion of those in the industry such as an editorial director/publisher of such a fine periodical. I only argue that an opinion can be offered while at the same time challenging readers to become involved in a thought process to weigh the issues and form their own opinions.

**Stephen Pastoor, General Manager
Egypt Valley CC
Ada, Mich.**

Feel like going postal? We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Pat Jones at pjones@advanstar.com, fax to 440-891-2675 or send them via snail-mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Make sure to include your name and phone number for verification. Letters may be edited for length or relevance.

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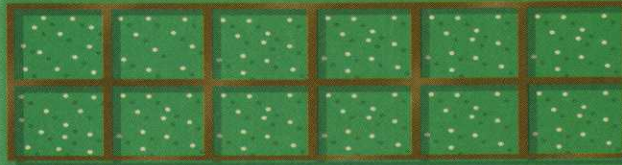
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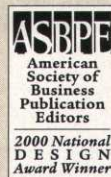
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14 Developing Your Hazard Communication Program
San Marcos, Calif.
Contact 800-472-7878

14-16 The NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition
Syracuse, N.Y.
Contact 518-783-1229

14-16 Penn State Golf Turf Conference
State College, Pa.
Contact 814-863-3475

16 The Microbiology of Turfgrass Soils
Tarrytown, N.Y.
Contact 800-472-7878

20 Iowa GCS State Meeting
West Des Moines, Iowa
Contact 515-232-8222

28-30 North Central Turfgrass Expo
St. Charles, Ill.
Contact 312-201-0101

DECEMBER

3-4 Michigan Golf Course Owners Association's Annual Conference
Location: TBD
Contact 517-482-4312

3-6 California Golf Course Owners' Convention
Location: TBD
Contact 831-375-6125

4-6 Texas Turfgrass Annual Conference & Show
San Antonio
Contact 409-690-2201

4-7 Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Regional Conference and Show
Columbus, Ohio
Contact 888-683-3445

5-6 New Hampshire GCSA Annual Meeting
Concord, N.H.
Contact 603-542-1957

6 Strategic Planning for Golf Course Operations
Ames, Iowa
Contact 515-232-8222

12 Maine GCSA's Annual Meeting
Portland, Maine
Contact 207-781-7878

12-14 New Jersey Turfgrass and Landscape Expo 2000
Atlantic City, N.J.
Contact 732-821-7134

2001

JANUARY

6-10 National Golf Course Owners Association's 2001 Annual Conference & Trade Show
Orlando
Contact 800-933-4262

9-11 Eastern PA Turf Conference & Trade Show
King of Prussia, Pa.
Contact 814-863-3475

14-18 National Institute of Golf Management
Wheeling, W.Va.
Contact 561-744-6006

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The old Grapevine at *Golf-dom* has been humming as the end of 2000 nears and the big GCSAA Show in Dallas looms in a few months. Here are a few selected grapes we've plucked from around the industry for your edification and amusement:

■ **Tour de Farce.** For once, a local media guy gets a story right. Craig DeVreize, sports columnist for the *Quad City Times*, called the forced departure of TPC at Deere Run superintendent John Netwal "a dirty deal and a predictable bit of scapegoating by a PGA Tour that looks less and less like the well-oiled machine we thought it was. Truth told, the Tour cut serious corners trying to make this small-market course pay quick dividends."

Having attended Deere Run's opening in East Moline, Ill., I can vouch for the fact that Netwal did a great job under tremendous pressure from a profit-hungry Tour.

■ **Call him Agro Al.** Simplot's emergence as a golf industry power continues with the establishment of Agrotain, a new business group led by our good friend (and my personal golf coach) Al Nees, the long-time Milorganite executive. Agrotain will make and sell additives that enhance urea performance. Speaking of which, Al is looking for something to enhance the gridiron performance of his first-to-worst Wisconsin Badgers.

■ **Better is better.** A few months ago, I was in the Chicago area for some meetings and some "business golf" with Bruce Jasurda of Tyler Enterprises, an employee-owned formulator and distributor that serves golf courses around the Great Lakes and Midwest.

Bruce emptied my pockets on the golf course, but filled my mind in the 19th hole with his views on the importance of trust between superintendents and suppliers. "We view our customers' trust as a moral pact, not simply a business transaction. We don't want to get big or go national and lose that. Bigger isn't necessarily better. Better is better."

Think about that the next time you're on hold for 45 minutes waiting for "the next

Heard It Through The Grapevine

BY PAT JONES



HERE ARE A FEW
SELECTED GRAPES
WE'VE PLUCKED
FROM AROUND
THE INDUSTRY FOR
YOUR EDIFICATION
AND AMUSEMENT

available Microsoft customer service representative."

■ **Off the beach.** Our good buddy Ted Horton has called it quits at Pebble Beach to spend more time with his family and do some consulting. Horton is unquestionably one of the finest executive superintendents – and gentlemen – in this business.

■ **Coming soon.** The leaner, meaner Scotts Co. will launch a line of high-quality branded seed blends early next year. Progress also continues on the development of a Roundup Ready bentgrass variety set for wide release as soon as 2003. Test plots are being established in the Chicago area as you read this.

Another note from Marysville, Ohio: Scott Todd, the executive who sent Christmas Eve pink slips to the Scotts tech rep force and oversaw the sale of the ProTurf group to The Andersons, is no longer with the company.

■ **Will PDI pass?** We don't know how the chapter delegates will vote, but we have a good idea how the rank-and-file feels. Why? Because *Golf-dom* spent some of its own bucks to do the first and only independent study of how superintendents would vote on PDI.

We also asked about other burning issues like job security, e-commerce, golfer recognition and the quality of the service received from suppliers. Look for the full results next month in our "Golf-dom Report" special issue.

One hint about the PDI findings — the folks in Lawrence probably won't be thrilled.

Pat Jones is the editor/publisher of Golf-dom. He can be reached at 440-891-3126 or pjones@advanstar.com.

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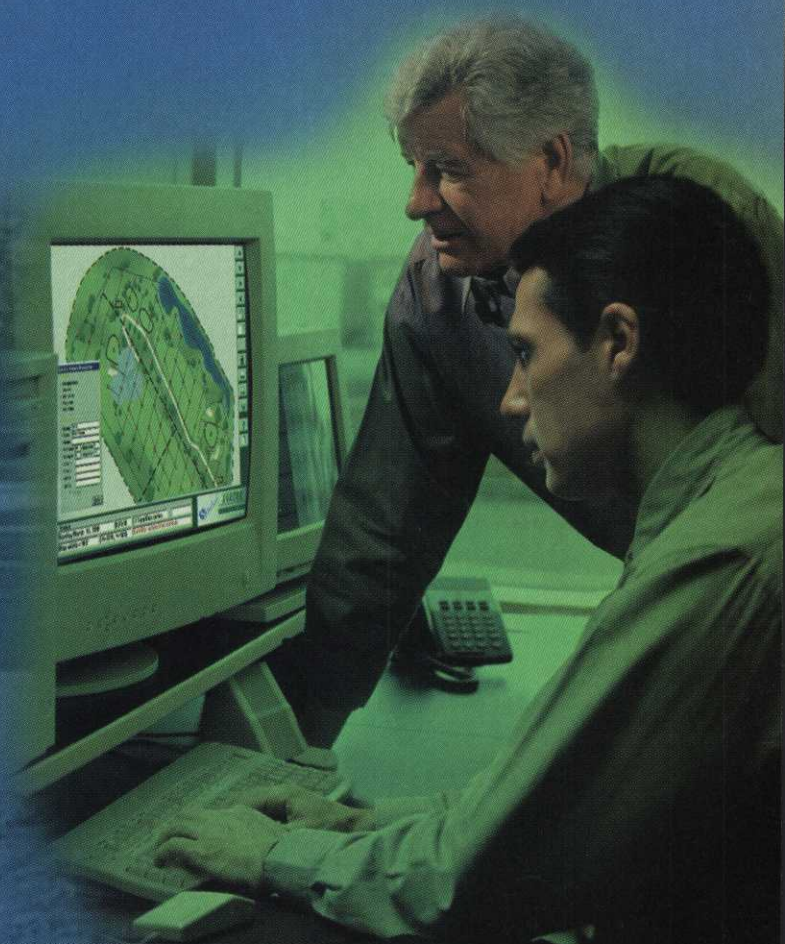
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I'm hoping they were only having bad days. I'm hoping they woke up the next morning with a more promising view of their profession. I'm hoping, but I'm not real confident that my assessment is correct.

I spoke with two superintendents recently from two different areas of the country, but they had one thing in common: They were both feeling out of sorts and jaded about their careers.

I don't know them well, but I feel sympathy for them. It's a shame because they are veteran superintendents who hold pride in their jobs. I assume they bust their butts daily to achieve the nicest-looking golf courses in their respective neighborhoods.

"It's a shame we're at the bottom of the totem pole, and we have been for way too long," one of the superintendents said of the profession.

Another superintendent, who talked of getting out of the business, lamented that few of today's golfers know the rules and the nuances of golf course maintenance. "I find myself having to defend myself to them," he told me.

OK, we've heard all this before. Superintendents felt underappreciated 10 years ago and 10 years before that. Heck, most everybody moans about their jobs.

But these two superintendents weren't whining, and they didn't come off as "we're doomed" pessimists. They seemed more concerned and alarmed about their feelings because they were down on what they love to do.

They didn't mention money, so it's clear to me they were talking about respect, not financial reward. They were also concerned about security in a field that's as fickle with its employees as professional sports teams are with their players.

"Ninety percent of the people in this business enjoy what they do and will go almost to the point of sacrificing their marriages and families to make sure their golf courses are in shape and admired," one superintendent said. "But if someone has one bad year, that person is gone."

I wonder how many superintendents feel the same as these two. I wonder if they carry their bitter feelings with them and how those feelings affect them mentally, physically and spiritually.

So Let Yourself Enjoy Work *Now*

BY LARRY AYLWARD



IF YOU'RE DOWN ON
YOUR PROFESSION,
YOU OWE IT TO
YOURSELF TO TRY
TO MAKE YOUR
SITUATION BETTER

If they are down on their profession, they owe it to themselves to try to make their circumstances better. But they must be proactive.

If it's the golf pro you have problems with, sit down with him and try to come to an understanding. If the general manager is breathing down your neck, tell him in a polite way that the added pressure doesn't help your stress level.

If you're in a no-win situation and you're job has become unbearable, quit and find a new job because chances are your family and social lives are suffering because of your stressful work life.

We spend most of our lives working; you, as superintendents, perhaps more than others. It's vital that we are content in our work, and a major part of that gratification results from feeling appreciated.

All of this reminds me of a passage from the book of Ecclesiastes. I can't tell you that I found these thought-provoking words while perusing the Bible; I discovered them, of all places, on the back of a John Mellencamp album. Just the same, the passage inspired me. I hope it will make you think, too. I leave you with these words of wisdom:

"Generations come and go, but it makes no difference. The sun rises and sets and hurries around to rise again. ... Everything is unutterably weary and tiresome. No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied; no matter how much we hear, we are not content.

"So I saw that there's nothing better for men than that they should be happy in their work, for that is what they are here for. And no one can bring them back to life to enjoy what will be in the future. So let them enjoy it now."

Larry Aylward, editor of Golfdom, cherishes his first job as a paperboy. He can be reached at 440-891-2770 or larryward@advanstar.com.