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Circle No. 109

Paul Latshaw

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It's after midnight here in my lovely room at the Pinehurst Hotel, and I felt compelled (by several irritated calls from my editor reminding me that it's well past deadline) to share one of our occasional tributes to the best and worst our industry has to offer. So, I'm happy to present another episode of Cheers and Jeers, *Golfdom* style.

Cheers to Tommy Witt, for grabbing the presidential horns of GCSAA like the Texas tornado he is. No offense to his predecessors, but it's refreshing to see El Presidente jump onto the GCSAA Web site and answer questions, promise solutions and deliver them within days. Remember that he just started a big time job on Kiawah Island, relocated his family and took over an awesome association leadership burden. To quote our friends at the PGA Tour, this guy is good.

Jeers to GCSAA's public relations agency for talking them into running a goofy new commercial featuring a Joel McRae look-alike singing, *Oh What A Beautiful Morning*, greenkeepers dancing with rakes, a mechanical squirrel and a nature-loving crew member returning a baby birdie to its nest.

It's cute and it'll probably win some advertising awards, but it does nothing to advance the basic message that we need to communicate to golfers. Nice try guys, but have you actually talked to any typical hackers lately? Let's keep it simple.

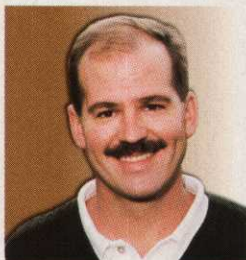
Cheers to our pals at the USGA Green Section. These folks don't get nearly enough credit for being great technical resources, wonderful communicators and perhaps the industry's most adept politicians. The Blue Blazers are the best and we aren't afraid to say it.

A **Cheers** within a **Cheers** goes to the boys in blue for hiring our old friend Kathy Antaya, the first woman to join the ranks of the agronomy staff in its 80-plus year history. A final **Cheer** to Stanley Zontek, the Polish provocateur of the Green Section, for constantly baiting me with opinions and comments that he knows I won't actually print. You owe me a beer, Stan.

Jeers (yet again) to Johnny "Grain on

Cheers and Jeers, Spring Edition

BY PAT JONES



CHEERS TO
TOMMY WITT, FOR
GRABBING THE
PRESIDENTIAL
HORNS OF GCSAA
LIKE THE TEXAS
TORNADO HE IS

the Brain" Miller. Wouldn't it be nice to have a few educated commentators out there? Perhaps we could rebudget some of the money for the next GCSAA commercial (which I predict will be set to the tune of *Bali Hai* from *South Pacific*) to pay the TV golf pundits to show up for a day-long seminar on the realities of prepping a golf course for a Tour event.

Cheers to Aventis, and the other companies like it, who quietly invest in our industry in ways superintendents will never see. In April, Aventis hosted a Poa Summit that brought together most of the world's leading turf scientists and consultants. This wasn't a sales pitch.

The company's products were barely mentioned. Aventis representatives simply wanted to facilitate a discussion about what's state of the art in *Poa* management. It was a class act in a time when some superintendents think commercialization has overtaken the industry.

Jeers to everyone, everywhere, who insists on yammering away on a cell phone on the golf course.

Double Jeers to those same phone-addicted clowns when they pull out their Palm Pilots and start doing business while you're standing in the fairway behind them hoping to finish the round in less than six hours.

Triple Cheers to the 10-year-old boy, who while playing in front of me on an average public course a couple of weeks ago, quickly and correctly fixed four or five ball marks while his dad lined up a putt. There may be hope for this great game yet.

Pat Jones is the editorial director and publisher of Golfdom. He can be reached at 440-891-3126 or pjones@advanstar.com



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BASF

She was walking toward me in the hallway. When she got closer, we made eye contact. But as soon as I began to smile and say "good morning," she lowered her head and scurried by without acknowledging me.

The first time it happened, I gave her the benefit of the doubt. Maybe she was in such deep thought when she passed me in the hallway that she didn't notice me. But when the same scenario happened again and again, I knew something was wrong.

She wasn't just not noticing me; she was ignoring me. She seemed to make it a point to let me know that she was too good to greet me.

Unfortunately, she was my new boss. Judging by her behavior, it was obvious that she was trying to set the tone for our relationship.

She succeeded. After a few of our encounters, I was as intimidated of her as I was of the crusty nuns at my Catholic grade school in the 1970s. I didn't know what she had against me.

However, it didn't take long for my intimidation of her to turn to disdain. I had no respect for her and no interest in learning from her.

Chances are, you know or have worked for someone like my old boss. At the time, you probably asked yourself: Does this person really think that he or she will command employees' respect by treating them as inferior?

I can't believe that the people in these roles are blind to the emotional pain they're inflicting on employees when they treat them like lepers. It's a terrible and confusing feeling to be on the receiving end of someone who uses non-verbal communication to degrade you.

Perhaps, though, it's a learning experience to work under such people. We learn how *not* to manage others.

Thankfully, I've spoken with several superintendents in the past few weeks who don't manage their crews by intimidating them. They realize they would be making a huge mistake by putting themselves on a pedestal for their workers to see.

What these superintendents stressed to me is that it's vital to put your ego aside when governing others. When you do, you earn respect.

For instance, a few superintendents said

Management By The Golden Rule

BY LARRY AYLWARD



YOU'RE HUMAN AND BOUND TO MAKE MISTAKES WHEN MANAGING PEOPLE. BUT RECOGNIZE THOSE ERRORS AND BUILD ON THEM

they're not afraid to get down and dirty in a golf course maintenance project — with their crew members at their sides. One superintendent bragged that he's often the most muddy member of his crew.

When a superintendent works on the course with his employees, he sends a message to them that he wants to work *with* them — not above them. His employees, recognizing that the superintendent is not caught up in being the big cheese, will respect him even more.

Just as important, the superintendents I spoke with pointed out to me that it's integral and proper to treat employees with respect. Tell them when they're doing a good job; say hello to them in the morning and goodbye in the evening; don't be afraid to laugh with them or go to lunch with them. It's OK to be friends with your employees.

Yes, you must occasionally pull rank on them. But don't ever do it *just* to do it. While you may view your action as a display of power, your employees will see it as a power play and the sign of an insecure leader.

Perhaps it's most important to monitor and criticize your management style. You're human and bound to make mistakes when managing people. But recognize those errors and build on them.

If I ever begin to treat someone as a subordinate, I want to think immediately of my former boss and remember the anguish she caused me. Then I want to feel ashamed.

But more importantly, I want to realize that it's best to manage by the golden rule — do unto others as you would have them do to you.

Larry Aylward, editor of *Golfdom*, can be reached at 440-891-2770 or laylward@advanstar.com.

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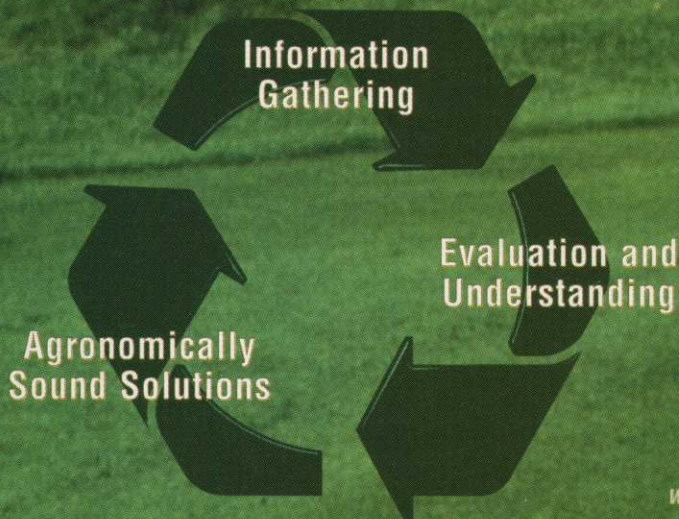
***- Kevin Cavanaugh, Superintendent
Plantation at Ponte Vedra - Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida***




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***Mike Wooten, Superintendent
Cedar Ridge Country Club, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma***




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Platinum Tee Club

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Royster-Clark Group acquires ProSource One

Royster-Clark Group signed a non-binding letter of intent with Agrilience LLC to acquire the assets of ProSource One and its parent company, Agro Distribution South. The businesses and assets acquired by Royster-Clark have been operated by Agrilience since their purchase from Terra Industries in 1999.

Bayer cracks \$10 billion in revenue

Pittsburgh-based Bayer reported a 13.6 percent increase in sales to \$10.1 billion for 2000. This is the first time the company achieved revenues exceeding \$10 billion. Earnings were also higher as after-tax profits rose 32 percent to \$202 million. Bayer also reported advances in the agriculture business segment. Demand was especially satisfactory for insecticides based on the active ingredient Imidacloprid and for seed treatment.

Syngenta reports increase

Syngenta reported that sales for 2000 grew 2 percent. First-half sales were up 7 percent, and second-half sales were down 4 percent.

Jacklin Seed opens Oregon facility

Jacklin Seed, a division of Simplot, has opened a 53,000-square-foot processing, warehouse and distribution facility in Albany, Ore. The operation, which includes two blenders and baggers, is more than four times larger than Jacklin's previous facility.

Bayer, Dow join forces

Bayer Professional Care and Dow Agro-Sciences have joined together to offer a rewards program — the Accolades Program. For more information, contact www.Bayer-ProCentral.com or call 800-842-8020.

Here Today, Consolidated Tomorrow

BUT SYNGENTA'S PULLIAM SAYS
MERGERS CAN BE GOOD

By Larry Aylward, Editor

You need a scorecard to keep up with all the mergers and acquisitions in the golf course chemical market. "Here today, consolidated tomorrow" would describe it well.

In the past two years, several small-, medium- and large-sized companies have merged with or acquired their counterparts. Some of the more notable deals included:

- Novartis Agribusiness and Zeneca Agrochemicals combining to form Syngenta.
- The Andersons acquiring Scotts Co.'s U.S. professional turf business.
- BASF purchasing the Cyanamid herbicide division of American Home Products.
- Simplot Turf & Horticulture buying Lange-Stegmann's professional products in the golf market.
- Dow Ag acquiring Rohm and Haas' agriculture chemical business.
- Aventis announcing it would spin off Aventis CropScience.

Who knows what mergers and acquisitions lie in the wings — if there are any companies left to comprise them. "It can't go on much longer be-



cause there aren't many of us left," said Keelan Pulliam, head of Syngenta's Professional Products Business Unit, with a laugh.

Of his own company, which has metamorphosed over the years, Pulliam says, "There's a lot of history and a lot of gray hair."

Why all the mixing and joining? Economics is the simple answer.

Raj Gupta, chairman and CEO of Philadelphia-based Rohm and Haas, said the decision to sell the company's agricultural chemicals business to Dow Ag was difficult but necessary. "It has become evident that the agricultural chemicals business will flourish more as part of a global firm with a stronger presence serving the agricultural markets," Gupta said.

For some superintendents, all the consolidation might be confusing — until they update their scorecards and grasp who is selling what. For the companies, customer service remains vital.

"What's important to the superintendent is the quality of products," Pulliam said. "It's also the service, information and technical support behind the products. It's about helping superintendents solve specific problems."

Jennifer Remsberg, residential market manager for Bayer Professional Products, said superintendents are more concerned about the fate of products, not the fate of companies. "This is a product-driven market," she added.

Still, superintendents should know that consolidation can be good, Pulliam said. "When mergers happen, the size of the businesses are much larger," he noted. "That allows us to spend the dollars we need on research and technology, which is critical to solving superintendents' problems."

Often, companies involved in mergers break away from their pharmaceutical and industrial parent companies, which can be positive, Pulliam said. They become stand-alone companies and focus their energies and dollars on one audience.

There are also concerns that consolidation will escalate prices. But Pulliam said, "There's plenty of competition [to keep prices in check.]"

What's next? Will Syngenta and Dow Ag unite to form Syndow?

"Mergers will continue," Pulliam says. "I'll let it go at that."

Houston, We Have a Problem

TEXAS COURSES HIT WITH OVERSEEDING WASHOUTS

By Frank H. Andorka Jr.

Much of the buzz at the South Texas GCSA's meeting in March concerned the unseasonably wet and cold winter that disrupted overseeding programs at many Houston-area courses.

"In my 16 years in the business, this is by far the worst overseeding season I've ever seen," said George Cincotta, superintendent at Riverbend CC in Sugarland, Texas.

Cincotta says normal overseeding (with *Poa trivialis*) occurs in Houston between Oct. 1 and Nov. 1, when temperatures range between 70 degrees and 80 degrees. This year, temperatures dipped into the 50s most days this winter, and 2 to 3 inches of rain washed the seed into the collars.

"There will be a lot of collars in this area looking great," said Robert Bryan, superintendent at Windrose GC in Spring, Texas. "But there will be some thin spots on the greens."

Bryan said he has heard other superintendents question the need to overseed after their experience this year. "A lot of guys are saying, 'If it's going to be like this, why do it?'" he said. "It's easier to maintain bentgrass if this going to be the result."

Speaking of overseeding, here are 10 guidelines for overseeding your greens and tees, provided by David Kopec, professor of turfgrass management at the University of Arizona:

1. Stop nitrogen fertilization at 25 days before overseeding. Substitute or maintain potassium fertilization.

Continued on page 18

Quotable

"I don't care if you have a hangover — just don't sound like it on the hotline."

— *Rhys Arthur, superintendent at Indian Spring CC in Silver Spring, Md., on guidelines for his employees when updating the "Course Condition Hotline"*

"On certain holes, they need it."

— *Greg Norman on Augusta National's plan to renovate several par 4s to make them more difficult. The Shark, by the way, missed the cut for The Masters. (Associated Press)*

"Every architect's dream is to do a project right on the beach. All you have to do is push it up and plant it, push it up and plant it ..."

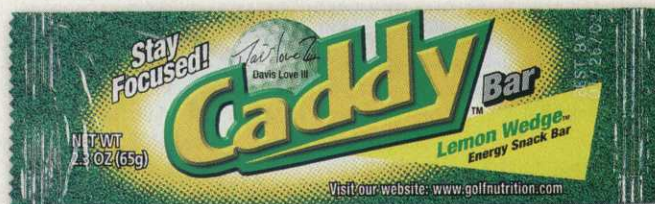
— *Architect Bill Love on getting back to basics in design.*

"I don't think it's a coincidence. This ball has made that much difference in my game."

— *Joe Durant, formerly ranked No. 208 on the PGA Tour and winner of two events this year, on using the new Titleist Pro V1 solid-core golf ball, which goes further and is easier to control. (USA Today)*

The Energizer

We don't want to insinuate anything, but maybe you should try a Davis Love III Caddy Bar to help you do your job. The Caddy Bar, manufactured by Phoenix-based Golf Nutrition, has 19 ingredients which are clinically proven (whoaa!) to help golfers improve their focus and concentration. We assume the bar can help superintendents, too.



The Caddy Bar, available in peanut butter and lemon wedge flavors, also contains lipoic acid and lutein, two nutrients important for nerve cell regeneration and energy recovery. So no more complaining about those 12-hour days. Now get to work!

Off The Fringe

Continued from page 17

2. Seven days before you overseed, decrease irrigation. Apply two-thirds of the regular irrigation.

3. Five days before you overseed, raise the mowing height by 1/16-inch on greens and 1/4 inch on tees.

4. Three days before overseeding, raise mowing height another 1/16-inch.

5. Then, as you start overseeding, mow the greens 1/16 inch lower. Then mow again immediately 1/16 inch lower than the first cut. You should lightly scalp the greens to remove the upper leaf tissue, which is now farther apart on the stems as a result of the raised mowing heights.

6. Lightly verticut in a minimum of two directions. Repeat as necessary to remove leaf material and to minimize lateral stolon disruption.

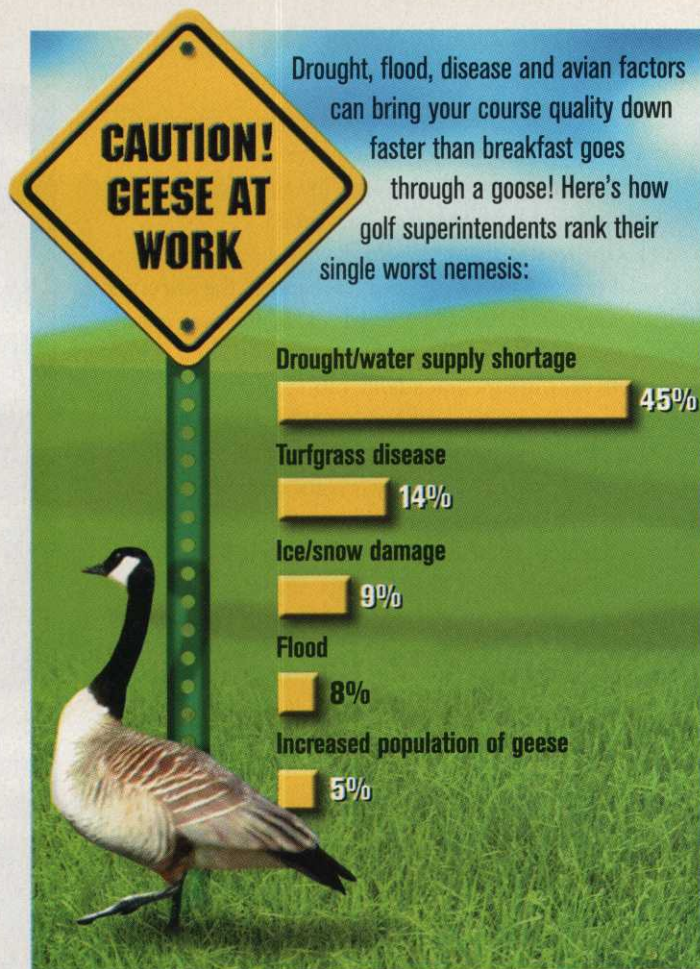
7. Do the same on tees, recognizing that different mowing heights will be used.

8. Overseed in three directions.

9. Topdress in two directions. Apply a total of about 3/16 to 1/4 inch of sand. Roll the turf with a weighted roller.

10. Irrigate three to four times a day, checking for germination and emergence.

Kopec asks superintendents to remember the key to spring transition is to avoid heavy verticutting before overseeding.



SOURCE: GCSAA, ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEDY



Scanning the Web

Frank Andorka reviews www.golfcoursejob.com

(All sites are preceded by <http://> unless otherwise noted)

Even in today's constricting economy, superintendents face the challenge of finding good employees. Here is a site, started by industry veterans, that will help you solve the problem:

www.golfcoursejob.com – Founded by superintendents Sam Hocutt and Clayton Hoyt, this site is as easy to navigate as it is useful. It allows superintendents and students to submit their résumés for a \$5 fee, payable by personal check, money order or cashier's check.

For that fee, superintendents receive individual Web sites with professional-looking résumés. A site remains active for a year with one free update. After a year, another \$5 keeps the site active. Users also receive their own Web addresses, which they can e-mail to prospective employers.

The site recently added a new benefit

for superintendents (no students allowed) who have lost their jobs: It waives the \$5 fee. It's a nice gesture that shows a healthy sensitivity fueled by the founders' intimate understanding of the profession. You can tell they know what being fired is like.

The job listings are extensive and informative. Unlike other golf job sites I've visited, this one strictly deals with the course maintenance side of the business (at least so far). You won't find any banquet manager or pro shop jobs here. (I'm partial to the superintendent's job at the Sandals Resort in Jamaica. The ad says they will pay your expenses to come interview – I'm there!)

The site also offers Web design and hosting services for individuals and clubs interesting in creating Web sites. www.golfcoursejob.com is one of the most comprehensive job sites I've seen, and it helps both sides of the employ-



ment equation make the connections so vital to job searches.

Editor's note and shameless plug: You can now purchase selected golf photos online from *Golfdom's* chief photo editor, Mike Klemme. Visit www.mikeklemme.com to purchase a framed Klemme shot projected on to canvas or sports.artselect.com/ to buy a print. Now, Mike, what about that *Golfdom* editor discount?

Golfdom's associate editor Frank H. Andorka Jr. currently compiles *Scanning the Web*, but has applied for the Jamaica job despite having no turfgrass management experience. You can reach him at fandorka@advanstar.com with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.

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