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# Golfdom

APRIL 2002 • VOLUME 58 • NO. 4

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Michigan State's Joe Vargas says there's no need to rotate fungicides for proper resistance management. So what are many superintendents to make of his notion, which goes against everything they've been taught?

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We sought Seattle-based Corbis Images to obtain the cool image of the man in deep thought.

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## Real-Life Solutions

# A Wetland Wonder

Architect, builder had to be at their best to build a golf course amid flood plains, marshes and streams.

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# Events

## SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

### APRIL

**9 USGA Green Section Regional Seminar**  
Little Rock, Ark.  
Contact 972-492-3663

**9 West Virginia GCSA Seminar: Labor Issues**  
Clendenin, W. Va.  
Contact 304-341-8021

**9 Central Texas GCSA Monthly Meeting**  
New Braunfels, Texas  
Contact 512-892-3664

**10 GCSAA Seminar: Management Strategies for the Turfgrass System**  
Palm Desert, Calif.  
Contact 800-472-7878

**15 North Texas GCSA's Monthly Meeting**  
Irving, Texas  
Contact 817-430-0445

**16 Cactus and Pines GCSA's Annual Meeting**  
Scottsdale, Ariz.  
Contact 480-609-6778

**22 USGA Green Section Regional Seminar**  
Honolulu  
Contact 253-858-2266

**23 Maine GCSA Meeting**  
Saco, Maine  
Contact 207-282-9892

**27-May 2 American Society of Golf Course Architects Annual Meeting**  
Santa Barbara, Calif.  
Contact 312-372-7090

### MAY

**1 Turfgrass IPM**  
Davis, Calif.  
Contact 530-757-8899

**2-6 19th Annual American Society of Irrigation Consultants National Conference**  
Tucson, Ariz.  
Contact 312-372-7090

Let us know about your events. Send information to Frank Andorka at 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, 44130. Fax information to 440-891-2675 or e-mail to [fandorka@advanstar.com](mailto:fandorka@advanstar.com).

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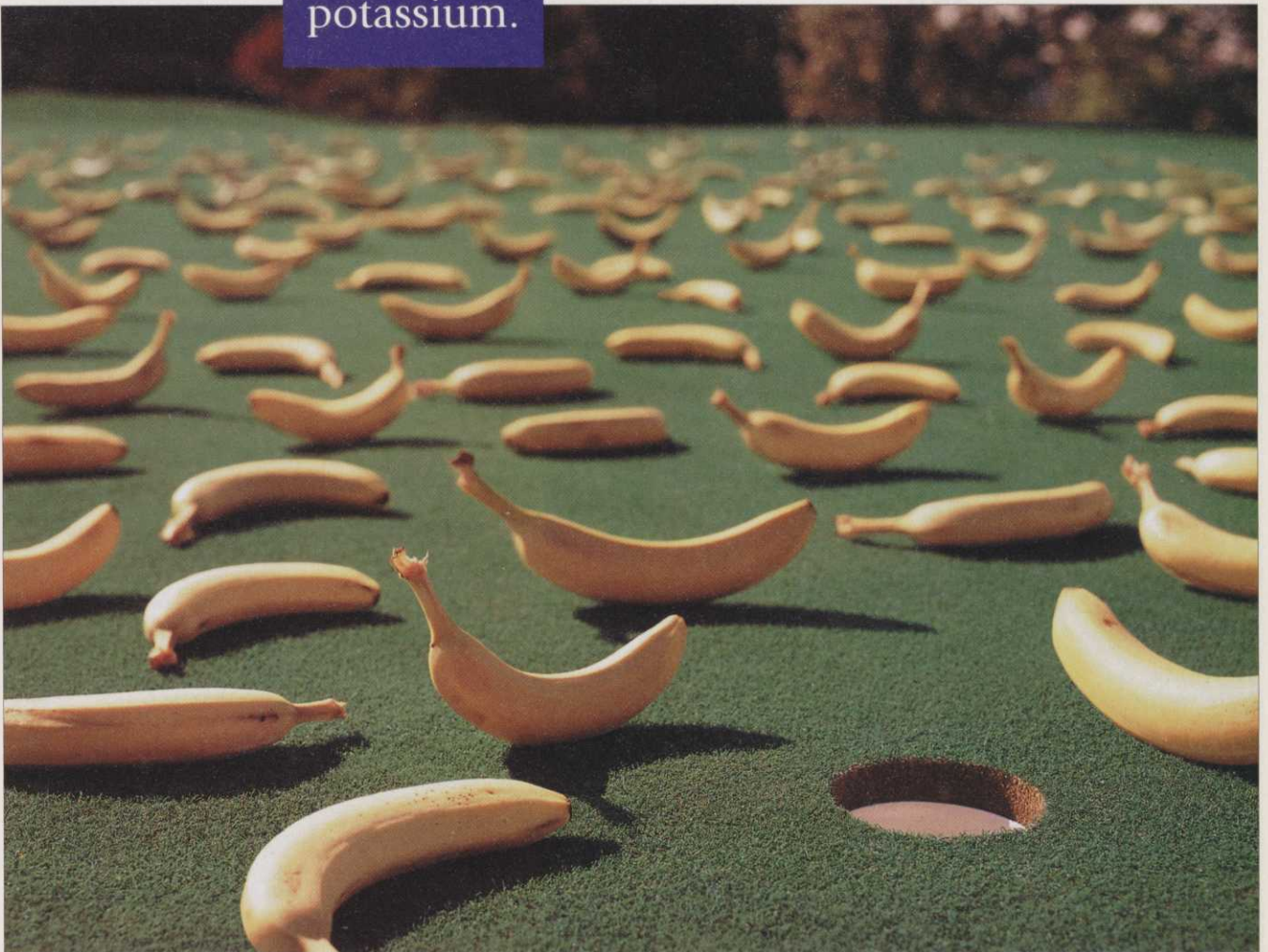
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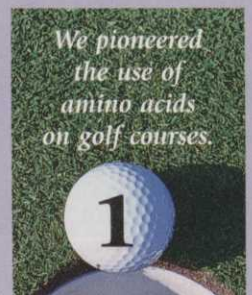
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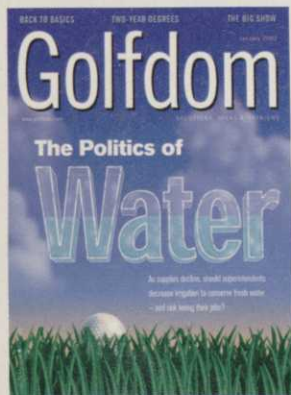


# Going Postal

■ WE'VE GOT MAIL

## Disagreeing with Duncan

I was pleased to see January's theme ("The Politics of Water").



The issue will continue to be an important one, if not the most important issue our industry will face going forward.

I was disturbed, however, to see Ronny Duncan's comments about desalinization in the article, "Dealing with Water Woes." I disagree strongly with Duncan's opinion that desalinization, or reverse osmosis, is too costly. I made a presentation last year at the GCSAA show on reverse osmosis, showing how cost-effective it can be. In fact, for a golf course now buying potable water, it can often pay for itself in as little as four years. I respect Duncan for his expertise in the field of seashore paspalum research, but I feel he's not qualified to offer advice about reverse osmosis.

**Rob Kloska, Superintendent  
The Jupiter Island Club  
Hobe Sound, Fla.**

## Heacock's Full of Hot Air

I'm finally responding to Mike Heacock's August 2001 article, "Been There, Seen That," about whether a CGCS promises something it doesn't deliver.

Apparently, Heacock believes that continued education is a waste of time, energy and money.

As Heacock knows, certification is a voluntary program designed to offer superintendents the opportunity to increase their knowledge. It wasn't a guarantee that all who enter the program would be exceptional superintendents. I would note, however, that since the inception of the certification program, surveys reveal that certified superintendents have moved out ahead of their non-certified colleagues on salaries and prestigious jobs.

The program wasn't designed to promote certified superintendents over non-certified ones.

There are many highly qualified superintendents who are not certified. Ironically, there are more non-certified superintendents attending the educational seminars than certified ones, so apparently they must believe it's not a waste of time as you do. Anyone who believes there is nothing to gain by continued education has his head in the sand.

I'm not sure how you arrived at the conclusion the CGCS implies something it doesn't deliver since

## A Pat on the Back

Congratulations to *Golfdom's* staff for reviving a great magazine and pushing it to such high status that it won a Folio award for editorial excellence.

Most of us old-timers are well aware of *Golfdom's* history. Before I changed jobs, I must have had hundreds of copies of the original magazine. Herb and Joe Graffis [founders of the original *Golfdom*] were superintendent-friendly, and I commend you guys for carrying on a great tradition.

**Robert V. Mitchell  
Turf Consultant  
Lewisburg, W. Va.**

the program's main focus is to provide the tools necessary for superintendents to improve themselves. As with any profession, there are no guarantees, no matter what letters someone has after their name.

**Clifford A. Wagoner  
Certified Superintendent  
Past President, GCSAA  
Modesto, Calif.**

**Editor's Note:** Heacock issued a clarification of his remarks in the December 2001 issue at the end of his column.

## Quit Gripping About Golfers

The article written by Joel Jackson, "Golfers are Like Sausage Eaters (February)," once again confirms for me that a good portion of the people working in golf course maintenance have an "Us vs. Those Dumb Golfers" attitude. This attitude serves absolutely no professional purpose, but it's no surprise to me. I've seen it in various forms my whole career.

On the other hand, I have worked with superintendents who realize that the "sausage eaters" are paying the bills. It's not their job to know everything that goes into having a golf course in good shape. After all, that's how I look at my job. If I don't meet the needs of my golfers, they'll go somewhere else to play.

Too many superintendents, however, carry an underlying contempt for golfers. This contempt is corrosive, such that it keeps superintendents focused on what they're upset about instead of doing something about it.

If Jackson is director of communications for the Florida GCSA, I would advise him to start communicating what he thinks Florida golfers need to

know about superintendents and quit writing insulting articles about the people his business is supposed to be serving.

**John Fiander, PGA Professional  
Sleepy Hollow GC  
Brecksville, Ohio**

## American, And Proud of It

Maybe your magazine should think twice about printing further articles by Mark Leslie. His article about golf course labor is a big slap in the face to all Americans ("Looking for Golf Course Labor in All the Right Places," February).

This is the typical kind of reasoning that is hurting our work force in general. The practice Leslie describes is in line with the likes of big business moving their factories to Mexico and importing all kinds of cheap junk manufactured in the Far East. Going outside of the United States for labor is ludicrous.

How are our kids supposed to pay for ever-increasing tuitions? All superintendents should hire Americans. They should buy American products whenever possible. If they cost a little more, so be it. Your grandkids will thank you.

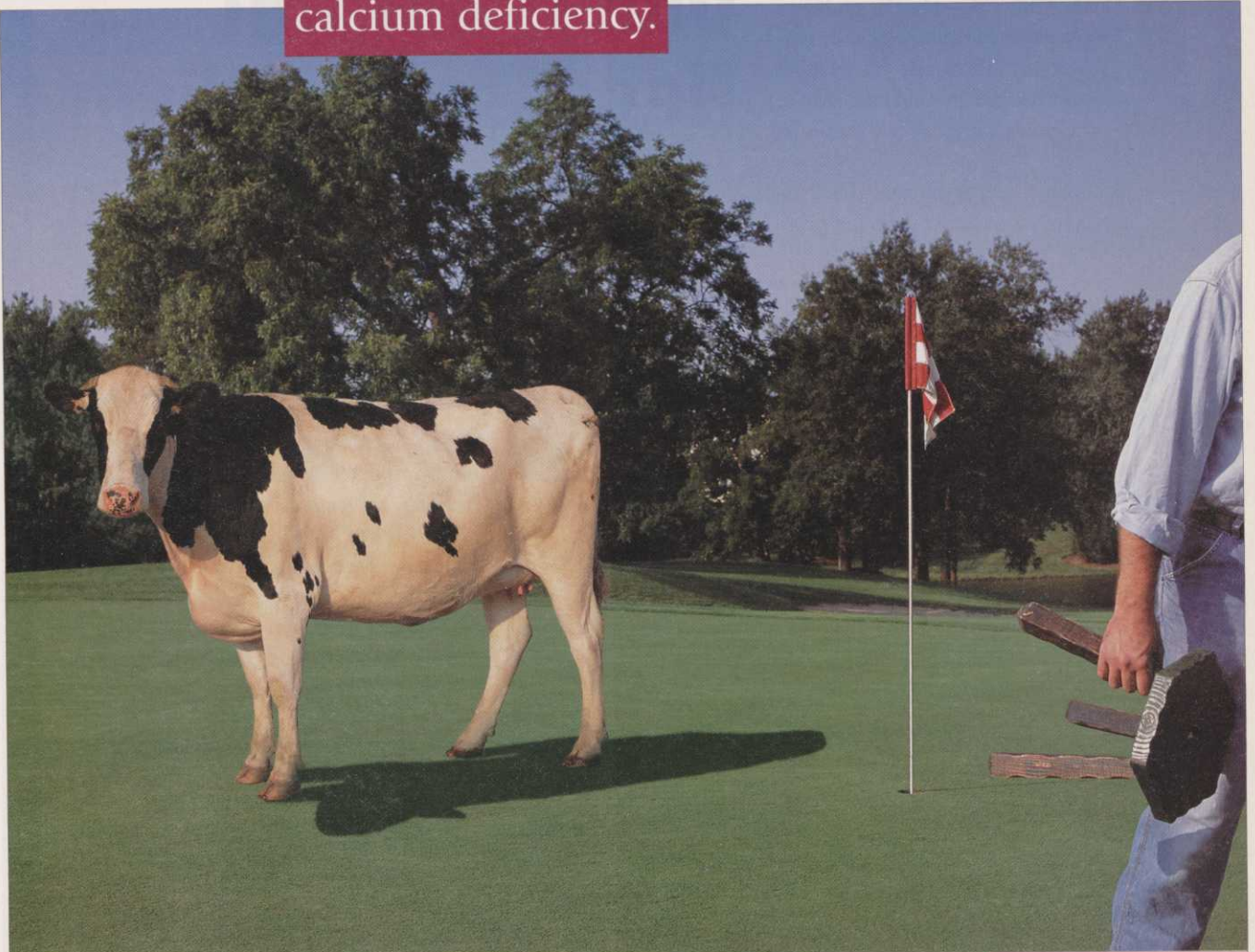
**Jerry Lange,  
Second Assistant Superintendent  
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Dubuque, Iowa**

**Editor's Note:** Don't shoot the messenger. Leslie is just reporting the news.

---

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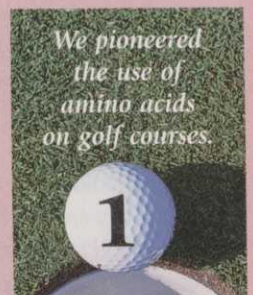


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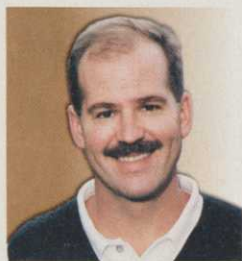
**I** turned 40 last month. I still feel — and usually act — like I'm a college sophomore, but chronologically I'm now in my fifth decade. Just to rub it in, when asked how old his daddy is, my 6-year-old will happily chime, "As old as dirt!"

I always thought that, as you grew older, you would have all the answers. But curiously, now that I'm officially as old as dirt, I seem to have more questions than answers. Here are a few that have been puzzling me lately...

- Which is better: bald or gray?
- Why do they call it "syringing" a green? I've yet to see anyone perform this task with a hypodermic needle.
- Why do golfers — particularly Tour players — increasingly expect perfect lies in bunkers? As our good friend Tim Moraghan replies when the pros complain about bunkers in USGA events, "It's a hazard. You're not supposed to be in there."
- Did it ever occur to you that some of the chemical companies' names that would work well in Dr. Seuss stories? ("Little Erasmus Mac-Dentis played a tune on his Syngenta-Aventis.")
- If these high-powered new balls and titanium clubs are so great, why do I still stink?
- Why isn't there a rule that makes it legal for a superintendent to smack anyone with a five iron? who asks, "So what do you do all winter?" At the very least, all superintendents should be supplied with a list of snappy comebacks to this question, such as "I pack up the van and follow the Grateful Dead around" or "I could tell you, but then I'd have to kill you."
- Why not hold a Texas death-match between Dr. Joe Vargas and Dr. Houston Couch to decide, once and for all, which one is right about disease management? Imagine the sponsorship possibilities...
- How many attendees will be mugged during the 2003 GCSAA show in lovely downtown At-

## Older, But Not Necessarily Wiser

BY PAT JONES



NOW THAT I'M  
OFFICIALLY AS  
OLD AS DIRT,  
I INCREASINGLY  
SEEM TO HAVE  
MORE QUESTIONS  
THAN ANSWERS

lanta? (I was there recently and wanted to stroll over to see the Olympic Centennial Park one evening. As I was leaving the hotel, the doorman said, "You're not actually going to walk around out there, are you?")

- Why doesn't Charles Barkley keep his big mouth shut about golf? Lengthening Augusta National is a racist conspiracy to keep Tiger Woods down? Yeah, right. The Round Mound of Sound needs to go to a junior event and watch these kids banging 'em past the 300-yard marker on the range. Then he'd know why Hootie and the gang at ANGC are sweating.
- What planet is Jesper Parnevik actually from?
- Will John Rocker receive a nomination in the category of Best Performance by a Redneck Jock in a Low-Budget Slasher Film for his upcoming role as a demented assistant superintendent in *The Greenskeeper*?
- Are there still people standing in line to pick up their badges at registration for the Orlando conference and show?
- Wouldn't it be cool if, before they were appointed, all green chairmen were required to ride around the course for a day disguised as crew members?
- How does the Easter Bunny find us if we're spending the holiday at grandma's house? (My kid asked me this, and I was stumped.)
- How soon will I be eligible to join AARP?

---

*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)*