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David Crow (above) believes several members of Congress, including Rep. Henry Waxman (below), are anti-pesticide and have an environmental agenda awaiting Obama when he takes office.

*Continued from page 30*

concerned about global warming. We have to promote that.”

The GCSAA has been proactive in gathering information that tells a positive story about its environmental prowess, Woodward notes. In cooperation with the association’s environmental wing, the Environmental Institute for Golf, the GCSAA has conducted or is conducting profile projects on water, pesticide and energy use that Woodward says support the profession’s position as an environmental steward.

“We have a darn good story to tell,” Woodward says. “We just have to get better at telling it.”

Bayer’s Cleveland says a more liberal administration shouldn’t change the pesticide industry’s sense of urgency to promote its products as beneficial to the environment when used appropriately. However, Cleveland realizes there are politicians and environmentalists whose opinions about pesticides will be difficult to sway.

“How do we go from changing the perception that we’re just controlling pests to showing that we’re actually creating healthier green spaces that sequester carbon and mitigate runoff and pollutants?” Cleveland asks. “That’s really where this discussion needs to go.”

Pesticide manufacturers have spent millions on research to create new products with less-toxic active ingredients the past few years. One well-known researcher, David Shetlar of The Ohio State University, has remarked how insecticides are “getting safer and safer and safer.” But the question among pesticide manufacturers is whether lawmakers will ever notice their efforts.

James says most lawmakers don’t know the hurdles a company must clear to register a new pesticide with the EPA. “And they certainly don’t focus on what chemical companies are doing to make their products safer,” he adds.

But lawmakers will listen to environmental activists and their opinions about pesticides, James stresses. This is a major concern, especially if it results in what James calls “draconian legislation.”

In his Pin High column, Larry Aylward says the Republican-dominated golf course maintenance industry should, in the words of one golf course superintendent, “root for Obama’s success.” See page 8.

However, James says RISE would be part of a green industry coalition to oppose such legislation if introduced.

“We will work closely in harmony with all members of the industry, including superintendents, to bring as much impact at the federal level as we can,” James says. “We still have friends in Congress, and we will keep them informed of the safety of our products and how they’re used responsibly by superintendents so they will be willing to push back against this type of legislation.”

While Obama has his doubters in the industry, others believe he and Congress will act sensibly in his environmental approach. Michael D. Jones, certified superintendent of New Mexico Tech Golf Course in Socorro, N.M., says he’s a registered Republican but he believes Obama will “bring a well-thought-out and reasonable approach to his appointments to the Environmental Protection Agency and any environmental legislation.” (In December, Obama tapped New Jersey’s Lisa Jackson to head the EPA. She is the former head of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.)

“Many of us in the industry realize the need and will embrace reasonable regulations,” Jones adds.

Others expect environmental change, but believe the industry will adapt to it. Matt Shaffer, superintendent of Merion (Pa.) Golf Club, expects change to be “dramatic,” but he doesn’t believe superintendents will be caught off guard by it.

“[That’s because] superintendents are far better stewards of the environment than the American public realizes,” he says.

Shaffer voted for Sen. John McCain, but he’s not bitter that Obama was elected.

“He wasn’t my candidate of choice, but he’s my president, and I’m rooting for his success,” Shaffer says. ■

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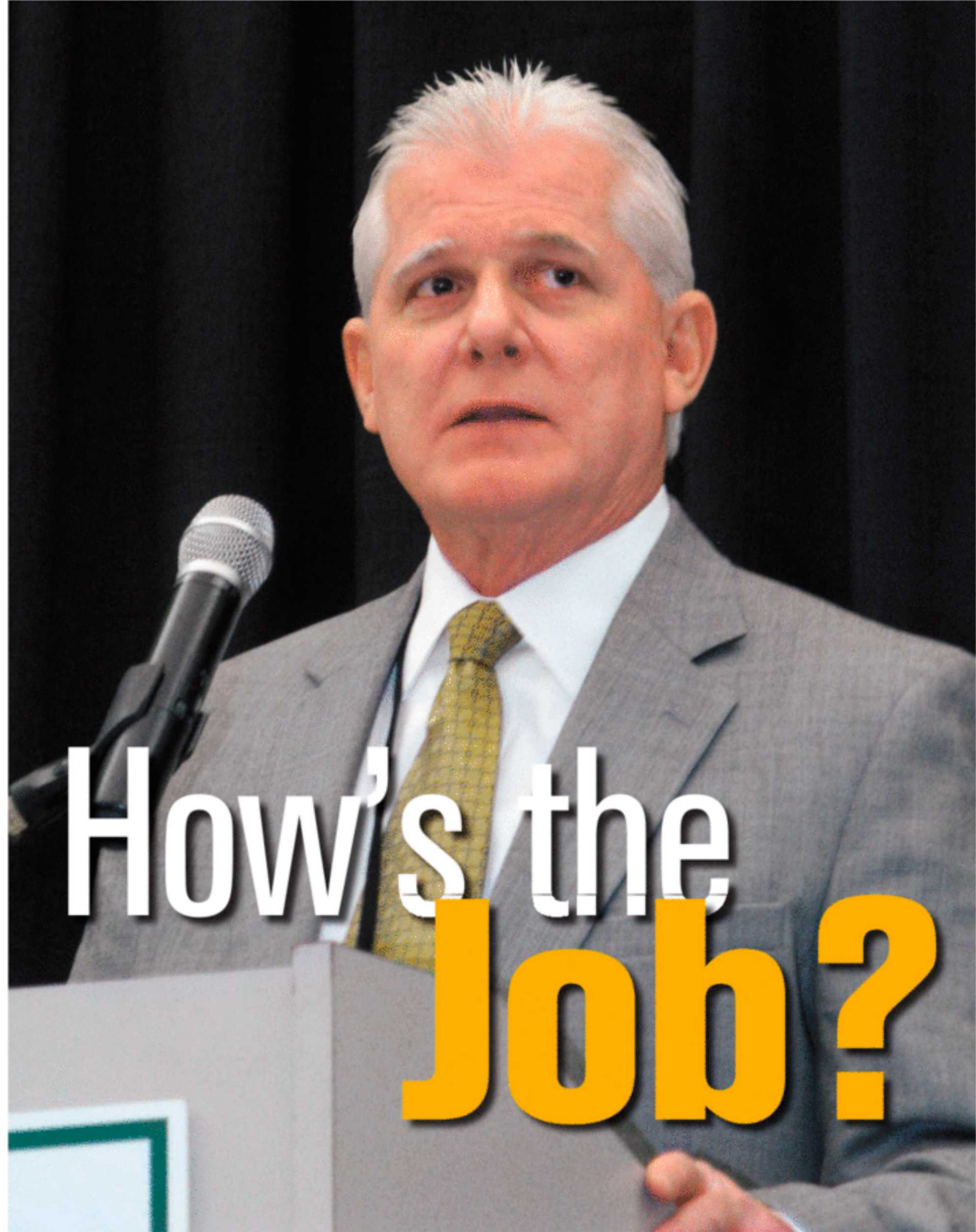
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Mark Woodward talks about his first six months as CEO of the GCSAA and his plans for the association



BY LARRY AYLWARD, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**F**our days after hosting the U.S. Open on the South Course at San Diego's Torrey Pines last June, Mark Woodward packed up and moved his life and career to Lawrence, Kan., to become CEO of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). Woodward, who began his post July 1, succeeded Steve Mona and is the first certified superintendent to lead the association.

Woodward, who became the director of golf operations for the city of San Diego in 2005, left Torrey Pines on a high note after an incredibly popular U.S. Open that included a finish for the ages — an injured

Tiger Woods defeating Rocco Mediate in a playoff. Incidentally, the course also made good news for its fair and challenging set up, not to mention its impeccable turfgrass.

"I couldn't have scripted it any better," Woodward says of the U.S. Open. "It ended on a very high note for me and for my day-to-day operational career in the golf business."

*Golfdom* caught up with Woodward recently to see how he's doing in his new job. Woodward, who was the GCSAA president in 2004 and a board member before that, talks about the economy, the association's members and how he plans to convince any naysayers that he's the right man for the job.

■ **So, Mark, what have you been up to for the past five months?**

■ There are a lot of things going on. I've been traveling a lot. Also, one of the things that I pledged to myself in my first 100 days was to interview all of my staff members — 112 employees. I want to get to know them personally. We talk about where they're from, their kids and their hobbies and their work here at the GCSAA. I've also been talking to the CEOs from the other golf associations and picking their brains about what they do in their organizations and getting their advice.

■ **Do you plan to change the GCSAA in anyway?**

■ We're a member-driven organization, and we're doing all we can to serve our members. I'll be the one out in the industry representing the association, so the face of the association changes from Mona's to mine. I've been to many shows as a member, and it's the first time I'll be on this side of the table. I want our members to know that we have 112 staff members here dedicated to providing programs and services for them. I want our members to know that we're here as a resource to them and to help them advance their careers.

We have great relationships with our allied golf associations, and that's something I'm going to perpetuate and enhance. That's one of the reasons I've been on the road so much — I've reached out to these folks and gone to their offices and sat down and talked to them and let them know that we really want to have a strong relationship with them as we move forward through the issues that are facing the industry.

■ **Have you thought about any long-term or short-term goals?**

■ I've put a lot of thought into them. The economy is a huge issue right now. Even when the economy was good, the golf industry was flat at best in some parts of the country. Even when the economy does recover at some point — and I know it will — will golf recover with it? That's one of the challenges we face because there's slow development.

One of the things we're really focused on

right now is that we've been selected as an industry leader in the environmental arena. As an association, we're the right people to lead in the environmental arena. You read in the paper every day and hear on the news every night about environmental issues. We play a key role in that. So we're going to lead the charge in collaborating with all of our allied golf associations, which gets back to us having strong relationships with them.

Another thing we need to focus on is our membership growth and retention. That's a challenge right now with the way the economy is. If we can retain our membership at the current level, I would be happy this first year or so until the economy gets better. But, ultimately, we need to grow membership.

The economy is a challenge for all of us. Right now, it's the No. 1 thing we're worried about. It affects our budget here at the GCSAA. I've gone through every single line item in our budget with my staff. It's a large budget. We did this so we can see where we can get the most value out of the money and resources that we have.

■ **How healthy is the association financially and from a membership perspective?**

■ The association is in pretty solid shape financially. We have no debt. We own our own building. We have a healthy reserve in case we get into troubled times like we are right now.

Membership in 2008 went up very slightly, but it has gone down a little bit the past few years. I would say flat is a good description of the growth of our membership. (Editor's note: Membership is about 20,000. A \$20 membership increase went into effect last May bringing annual dues to \$320.)

It's a challenge right now to get some of our members to see the value we provide as an association. But you never really understand the programs and services we have to offer until you get in this building and see them. It's really staggering and impressive. And that's my challenge — to try and get that word out to our members about what we have to offer them, whether it's through

*Continued on page 36*

“The association is in pretty solid shape financially. We have no debt. We own our own building.”



### Woodward's Peers Like That a Superintendent Is Leading Them

*Golfdom* recently surveyed readers about Mark Woodward becoming the first superintendent to lead the GCSAA as its executive director. We asked readers: What do you think of the association's selection?

**52** It's great that an executive director knows exactly how to do our jobs

**35** Not every agronomist could do a good job, but Woodward is a good fit

**12** We should have a professional association executive leading us

*Based on 626 responses*

*Continued from page 35*

troubled times or to help them do better at their jobs. One of the things I'm going to do personally is stay very engaged and connected with our members because I understand their plights. I've been through them in my career. After 35 years you see just about everything there is to see at one time or another. I plan to get out and speak to the chapters and interact with members and hopefully get feedback from them about what it is we can provide to make their association better.

■ **What do you say to members who say they're not getting the bang for their buck in terms of membership dues and education?**

■ That's an interesting question. I don't think I fully understood what the GCSAA had to offer until I sat in this seat right now. I think the association needs to do a better job of telling that story. If you have an issue or you think there's something we can do better, please tell us because we need your feedback. Also, there's nothing sacred around here in terms of programs and services. If we find that there's a program or service that's not meeting the needs of our members, I'd be glad to look at it, analyze it and do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis on it and see if it's something that we need to rethink, retool or eliminate and channel those resources into something that gives members the benefits they need. When we talk at our chapter meetings and we interact with our chapters and our boards and our members, invariably it comes out, "Oh, I didn't know the GCSAA did that." If you have our phone number — 800-472-7878 — and call us, we're going to be able to help you and give you the value you need. That's our mantra here — "members matter most."

■ **Are you re-examining the support and resources that GCSAA board members should and shouldn't receive?**

■ When I was on the board, I headed up a committee at one time to address that issue. I understand the members' concerns about this, but I also understand the other side

of the coin. Our board members put in a lot of time and blood, sweat and tears, and they have a lot of passion for what they do here. And they represent this association at many events around the country and even the world. And it's important they have the resources needed to do that job.

■ **As CEO of the GCSAA, what to you is money well spent, and what to you is money not well spent?**

■ Money well spent gets back to having staff to provide the members with programs and services that the members desire. With that in mind, however, I'm looking at every position here and making sure that we're aligned. Part of my job in the organizational structure is not only to look at the leadership team that reports to me, but to look at what's under that leadership team. In the past, it has been a little bit out of balance in terms of areas of responsibility. I want to clean that up a little bit from an organizational standpoint. That forces us to look at every position in the association to make sure we're getting what we need out of that position.

My focus as far as money well spent is getting the most bang for our buck in terms of member programs and services that we provide. We don't want to provide programs and services that don't have value.

When the economy gets better, I hope to grow the budget and get more resources. But right now I'm just focusing on what we can do with the resources we have. And it's pretty tight. I'm not going to kid anybody.

■ **Even though you're a superintendent, do you still feel like you have to prove yourself in this position?**

That's an interesting question. I've received many comments and e-mails and letters and phone calls from people who congratulated me and said I was the right choice. I'm sure there is a percentage of people out there who think I was not the right choice. I understand that. You're not going to please everybody in everything that you do at this level. But I will do my best to make this association better. I'll put my heart and soul into this place. If there are naysayers who aren't convinced I'm the right person for the job, I will convince them that I am. ■

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# If I Ran the Golf Industry Show

... I'd get Bill Murray (Carl Spackler) to speak and I'd host a laser-tag game on Saturday morning — among other things

BY CHRISTOPHER S. GRAY SR.

I've been attending the Golf Industry Show for more years than I can remember. Now, each year always seems to be a little different than the one before — sometimes for the better, sometimes not. The GIS powers that be are constantly looking for new ways to improve our wintertime, week-long conference and show experience.

I, for one, applaud this very valuable effort, so much in fact that I'm going to offer a few light-hearted ideas of my own that I feel would drastically improve the GIS. For the record, the powers that be can feel free to implement any or all of my suggestions.

## The keynote speaker

I have two words for you — Bill Murray. This is the easiest decision to make since it was decided that jelly should be spread on top

of peanut butter. Few industries have a cult-worshipped icon the magnitude of the “Caddyshack” character Carl Spackler, played by Murray. While some superintendents feel his “unprofessional demeanor” insulted our profession, most of us feel the exact opposite, not to mention the millions of golfers who quote the movie like gospel. We embrace his over-the-top, gopher-hunting antics and flower-demolishing golf swings, while recanting the “Cinderella story.”

The “real” Cinderella story would be Murray standing up at the GIS to give us 45 minutes that would live for an eternity in our memories.

## The trade show

I've always wondered exactly where the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America finds the door attendants who

*Continued on page 40*



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Perhaps it's time to end the reign of the door-Nazi concept and begin a new tradition of runway models handing out donuts and coffee.

*Continued from page 38*

guard the trade-show floor entrances like it's Fort Knox. These often elderly Wal-Mart type greeters take their very limited authority a little too seriously at times by stopping us and carefully inspecting our name badges for the correct color to gain access.

Perhaps it's time to end the reign of the door-Nazi concept and begin a new tradition of runway models handing out Krispy Kreme doughnuts and Starbucks coffee. As Homer Simpson poetically stated, "Donuts. Is there anything they can't do?"

I would also award .25 continuing education units (CEUs) to any members who can walk the entire trade-show floor in less than six hours. I would further award an additional .25 CEUs if those same members don't have to take multiple doses of pain relievers the next day. Seriously, the show floor is getting so large that soon attendees will need compasses to navigate it. I can hear attendees say now, "The Toro booth is three clicks northwest of the John Deere booth and two clicks south of the media center."

By far, the most frustrating thing about the trade show is walking through the aisles and having to zigzag around the small cluster of attendees who feel that the middle of the aisle is the ideal spot to hold conversations. These incredibly inconsiderate people are so oblivious to the other people who are actually walking in the aisle that they should immediately be removed from the show floor and placed in small detention cells outside the entrance doors for others to openly mock.

OK, let's talk about the ribbons. Can we pass some type of rule that limits the number of ribbons that one attendee is allowed to wear on his or her name badge? This is getting way out of hand. I think I saw one attendee actually trip over his ribbons last year in Orlando. People, this is a professional association, not the military! More ribbons do not indicate a higher rank of membership. (My apologies to the certified

golf course superintendent member who also serves on a GCSAA committee, and is his chapter's voting delegate as well as a member of the Golden Tee Club.)

I would make sure that the "employees" who run the GCSAA Bookstore are a little more familiar with what the GCSAA is and does. Last year, an "employee" who took my credit card and bagged my new \$65 GCSAA logo golf shirt asked me, "What do you guys do again? Play golf?"

Unbelievable.

### Vendors

I have a huge amount of respect for the amount of work it takes vendors to set up and man their booths for two and half days of sheer networking fun and excitement. However, there are a few areas that warrant some changes.

Companies should not be allowed to have a trade-show booth that exceeds a typical golf course maintenance facility and clubhouse — combined. People literally get lost going from one side to the other in these behemoths of the trade-show floor. Is it really necessary to show every piece of equipment every year at the show? Do us all a favor and scale down these enormous booths.

Also, the excuse of keeping it so big because the "other guys have booths that are sooo big" no longer has value. Remember what your mother always said, "If the other guy jumped off a bridge, would you jump too?" If your answer is "yes" to this question, then it certainly shows who is leading the industry and who is following.

I would also enforce a booth mandate that states that companies that have not changed their booth designs since the Richard Nixon administration will be forced to dress in 1970s-style clothing.

You know who you are!

And if you decide to keep that retro-style design, you must take it a step further in your wardrobe. Just think how far out you will look wearing those lime-green leisure suits and bell-bottomed pants!

*Continued on page 42*

