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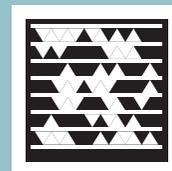
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I arrived in Minneapolis looking forward to an interview with Scott Kinkead, executive vice president of Turfco. The company is celebrating its 50th year in the industry, and Scott and I were able to meet for a quick beer the evening before the interview.

He mentioned that he didn't expect his father, John Kinkead, to make it out for the interview. I told Scott that I understood.

But when I pulled up my rental car to the Turfco parking lot in Blaine, Minn., out hopped Mr. John Kinkead, 81 years young. What a pleasant surprise.

Turfco may be celebrating 50 years in the industry – see my feature on the company on page 32 for the full story – but the Kinkead family has been in the turf business for much, much longer. John's father, Robert Stanard Kinkead, created National Mower in 1919. National Mower created some of the first rough mowers for this industry.

Before the interview on Turfco started, John started telling me about the history of this great magazine that I recently inherited.

"You know, Herb Graffis was an interesting man," John told me, referring to the person responsible for creating *Golfdom* in 1927. "He was a smart man."

And my history lesson began. A lot of it was "off the record" — stories about the players in the industry 50 years ago. He started out in sales for National Mower, and was eyewitness to the growth of the golf maintenance industry over the last 60 years. John jokes that he was only two years old when he first got involved in the family business.

"You know, this industry, for a long time, was recession-proof," John told me. "It was always steady, until one day it became unsustainable. And then we all had to get back to work!"

John talked about the days when the GCSAA conference and show were in hotel ballrooms. He told me that there was a time when salespeople from competing companies used to ride together to make calls to golf courses.

The evolution of topdressing was interesting. The fact that topdressing originally was done by a laborer with a shovel made sense to me. But

A History Lesson from Turfco

BY SETH JONES



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the evolution of topdressing is quite the tale.

Initially, topdressing was something that superintendents did maybe twice a year after aeration, and only on greens. As time progressed and knowledge of the agronomic benefits of topdressing grew, the desire to do it more often and more effectively increased.

But when superintendents wanted to topdress as often as every 10 days, both light and frequent, the company knew they had to create an entirely new topdresser. The need for larger capacities that could topdress wider areas grew. What started with the greens progressed to the tees then to approaches and all the way to fairway topdressing.

Through innovation, the company combined spinning topdressing with electronic controls. A superintendent could topdress greens, tees and approaches on the fly at the touch of a button. The days of the laborer with the shovel were long forgotten.

Scott told me privately that his dad is sometimes too humble... that he won't take credit for many of the innovations he's responsible for in the industry. This humility was apparent, as there seemed to be a few times when John would suddenly downplay his own role in the story.

As my history lesson was wrapping up, I looked at John and Scott and thought to myself that in that one room, we had almost 100 years of experience in the golf industry. John accounted for 60 percent of those years, while I accounted for just a little over 10 percent.

It's times like these that I realize that my window to this industry is a small one. I'm fortunate that people like John pull back the blinds for me every once in a while.

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A

tree, a boulder and a piece of sod walked into the Lake Omigosh 19th Hole and Whine Bar...

Bartender: “Hi guys. What’ll you have?”

Tree: “I’d like a glass of water with a shot of soap; I need some phosphorus to pick me up.

Bartender: “Sorry. Can’t sell any phosphorous during the summer rainy season. It might wash into the bay.”

Tree: “Well, where does the phosphorous go now when the soap goes down the drain? The county dumps its treated water directly into the bay? I don’t live near the bay and I need that phosphorus to make my roots strong so I don’t blow over in a storm.”

Bartender: “Sorry pal. That’s the law. No P for plants in the growing season, and that goes for you, too, Sod Guy.”

Tree: “OK then, just water with lemon.”

Bartender: “No can do. Lemons are out of season and would have to be shipped from California, and due to the new climate change laws limiting emissions by trucks and planes, no more fruits or vegetables will be shipped cross-country.”

Tree: “OK, just a glass of water.”

Bartender: “Coming up. That’s five bucks. We are facing a water shortage. We have to charge for water to discourage consumption and pay for the electricity to make the ice for your drink. You know how bad those power plants pollute. The money will be going for the construction of giant wind and solar farms nearby to power everything.”

Boulder: “What if the wind doesn’t blow and the sun doesn’t shine for awhile?”

Bartender: “I don’t know anything about that. The manager said something about having to close down from time to time for power grid priorities.”

Boulder: “You guys aren’t having it easy trying to get water to survive, but I have problems too! I used to be a mountain. Thanks to erosion, I’m now down to a boulder and my future isn’t looking bright. Next I’ll become a rock, then a stone and a pebble and eventually just sand

A Tree, a Boulder and Some Sod Walk Into a Bar

BY JOEL JACKSON



IF EPA HAS ITS WAY

I CAN ONLY TAKE

A DRINK TWICE

A WEEK NO MAT-

TER WHERE I LIVE

— WASHINGTON

STATE, KANSAS

OR FLORIDA.

grains. When my sediment is runoff in a stream I’ll be blamed for polluting the waterways.”

Sod: “If EPA has its way I can only take a drink twice a week no matter where I live — Washington State, Kansas or Florida. And I have to undergo an operation to remove 40 percent of my body so that when I do drink there will be less of me needing water. Frankly, Boulder, it amazes me that people don’t realize that using me along those waterways will keep your sand out of the rivers and lakes. By cutting back on the amount of grass there will be more dust in the air, and more storm runoff actually causing worse problems than before.

“Sure, every now and then I need some plant medicine to get over a disease or fight off weeds, but look how people pamper rose bushes and then they get stuck by thorns for their trouble. What did I ever do to hurt anyone? Have you seen Fido or the kids romp around in rose gardens, ground ivy beds or cordgrass clumps?”

Sorry, there’s no humorous punch line to this farfetched fable. This fantasy was inspired by the U.S. EPA telling a recent delegation from the Florida Fertilizer & Agrichemical Association, while discussing NPDES and the Numeric Nutrient Criteria issues, that EPA doesn’t answer to Congress.

Take action. Respond to those GCSAA Action Alert requests. Write your legislators. They might have a different opinion on EPA’s attitude.

Certified Superintendent Joel Jackson is Executive Director of the Florida GCSA.



The future is in your hands.



Vote now for your favorite Intelligent Use of Water™ Film Competition finalist. For each of the first 2,000 votes received, Rain Bird will donate \$1 to the Ground Water Foundation. As a thank you for helping decide the 2011 Green Industry Award winner, the first 2,000 voters will also receive a free hat. A film wins, the environment wins and you win. Cast your ballot at www.questex.com/IUOW

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Without water, life itself does not exist. Examples of water's importance (or lack of) is being played out this summer across agricultural fields and golf courses

through the southeastern and southwestern United States. As an industry, our staying abreast of the growing water crisis and subsequent water issues both locally (ex. Tri-State Water Wars – Alabama, Georgia, Florida) and globally (drinking water riots in India) helps us put in perspective water's worth, both economically and environmentally.

Highly conserved, the amount of water that was present at the formation of Earth is the same today. We don't need to explore for water; we know where it is. But water is not geographically evenly distributed. Thus, it is costly to transport it to where it is needed.

As you might suspect, water is least expensive around the Great Lakes, which contain 20 percent of the world's fresh water. In a 2010 survey of residential water use, Detroit, Chicago and Milwaukee had the lowest water rates, ranging from \$24.12 to \$28.36 per month for a family of four each using 100 gallons of water per day⁽¹⁾.

However, prices for water around the Great Lakes are increasing, because — and it seems intuitively crazy — demand has fallen due to industry and population migration. If your business is selling water, as many municipalities do, and your demand is down but fixed costs increase — you make up the difference by increasing rates. In 2010 the cost of water rose on average 9.4 percent across the country.

In the southwestern United States, government water projects brought cheap water and energy that drove population and industry growth in the region. When demand began to exceed supply, water conservation efforts — through restrictions and bans — were instituted to conserve water. Those water conservation efforts worked. By reducing their water use, cities have avoided investing in expensive alternatives like salinity plants, water diversion proposals and buying on the market.

What is somewhat surprising is how inexpensive water is in the southwestern United States.

What is Water Worth?

BY KARL DANNEBERGER



A family of four using 100 gallons of water per person per day will pay \$ 32.93 per month in Las Vegas and \$34.29 per month in Phoenix. That same family will pay \$65.47 in Boston and \$72.95 in Atlanta. The government funded water projects, which have been so critical for economic growth, have subsidized lower water prices.

Based on the above figures and depending on the area of the country, according to my calculations a gallon of water is around 0.2 of a penny per gallon. Meanwhile, If you drink bottled water, the cheapest bottle will cost you about \$1 a gallon.

Golf course superintendents who buy their irrigation water will no doubt disagree with me about whether water is cheap or not. Even switching to effluent water is now approaching the cost of potable water in some areas of the Southwest. I guess water is water.

Yet compared to other commodities the cost of water does not even show up on the radar screen. With water becoming scarcer and the quality issues rising, along with the issues of improving infrastructure, how can the current prices be sustainable without subsidies, restrictions and bans?

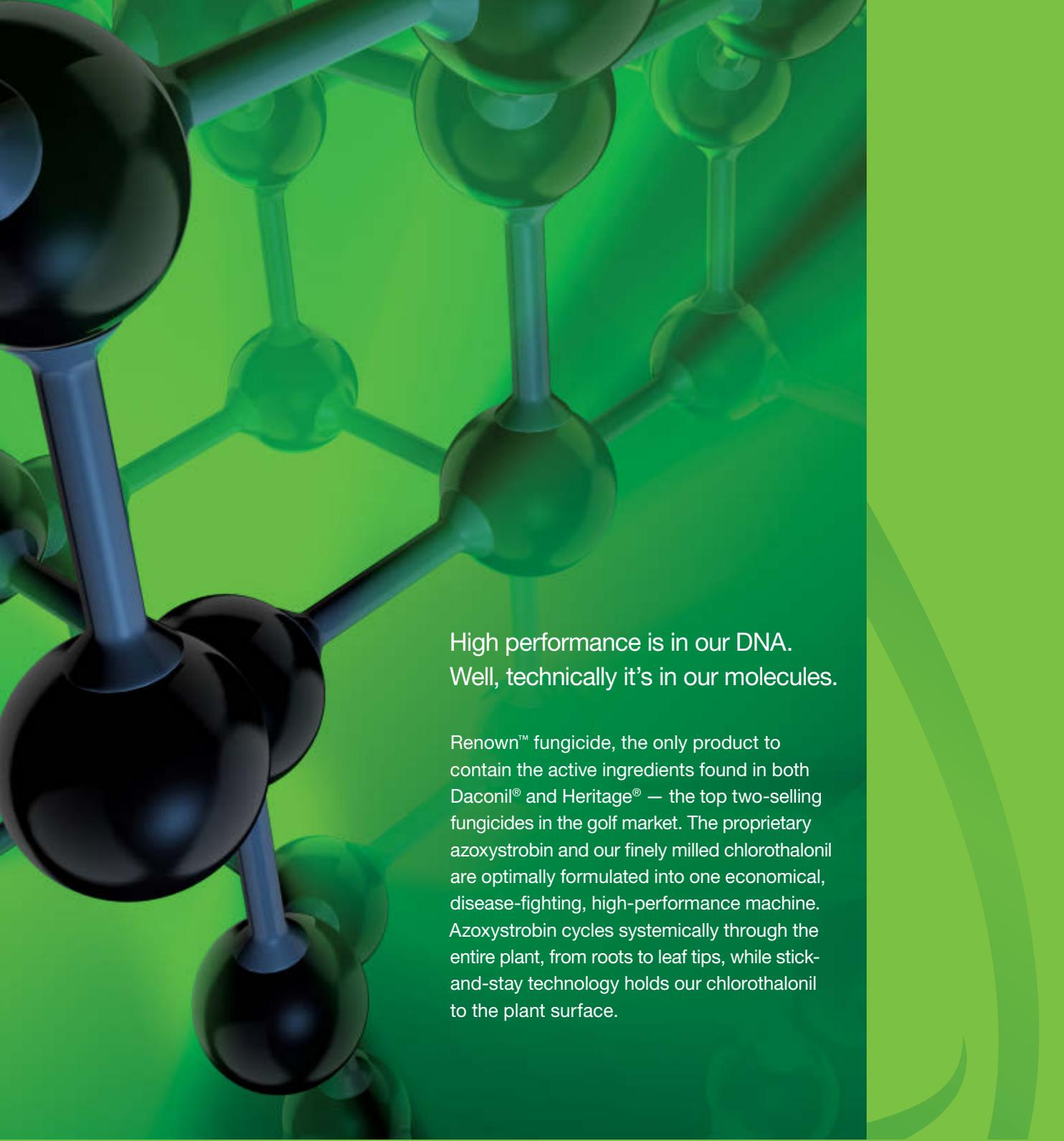
I do not have any grand ideas or solutions. I can only remind you what we do best — research the best solutions, educate others, and stay engaged in the discussions that will determine water policy.

If we don't do those things, our lifeblood will disappear.

**A FAMILY OF
FOUR USING 100
GALLONS OF WATER
PER PERSON PER
DAY WILL PAY
\$32.93 PER MONTH
IN LAS VEGAS AND
\$34.29 PER MONTH
IN PHOENIX.**

REFERENCE ⁽¹⁾ The Price of Water: A Comparison of Water Rates, Usage in 30 U.S. Cities. April, 2010. <http://www.circleofblue.org>

Karl Danneberger, Ph.D., Golfdom's science editor and a professor at The Ohio State University can be reached at Danneberger.1@osu.edu.



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TM



The Climate

THE WEATHER IS *LITERALLY* A KILLER.

The National Weather Service reports 64 people have died in 15 states as a result of the heat wave that gripped the nation last month and spilled into this month. A scorching July 2011 set 9,000 record temperatures across the nation. It was enough to get the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America to issue a weather-related press release for the second year in a row, asking golfers to try to understand what superintendents were going through.

But what, exactly, are superintendents going through? Is this just another hot summer, with more flooding and wider droughts, or is this climate change in action?

There are few topics as controversial as climate change and whether man has a hand in rising worldwide temperatures.

On one side of the debate there are the deniers, who see a sinister plot involving virtually every institution of higher learning and governments across the globe conspiring to point the finger at man, and thus calling for vast reductions in greenhouse gases, primarily CO₂.

On the opposite end of the spectrum are advocates of greenhouse gas reduction. They see big business, especially multinational corporations and oil companies, ignoring sound science and its conclusion that mankind is responsible

for changes in the weather as a way to avoid costly changes to emission outputs and searches for alternate energy sources.

Where do superintendents stand on the issue? And what are they seeing at the golf course to support or oppose climate change?

An unpopular opinion?

David Sexton has been the Director of Grounds at the Meadow Club in Fairfax, Calif., for the past 25 years. He's been keeping weather records since he first started working at the course 29 years ago. Those records have led him to a stark conclusion.

"I absolutely believe we are affecting the climate," he says.

It's a view he believes isn't shared by a majority of his colleagues. The issue can be so volatile that Sexton avoids talking about it when it comes up. Instead, he

Armed with ample weather knowledge and experience, superintendents share their insights on the controversial topic of climate change.

Change Conundrum

BY ANTHONY PLOPPI

says, “We talk about our golf games.”

Sexton didn’t keep weather data to make a point or bolster his conclusions; he did it out of pure enjoyment.

“I’ve had a lifelong fascination with the weather,” he says. “I’m not looking at the numbers to prove or disprove.”

Since the mid-1990s Sexton has seen a trend. The high temperature for each month is rising about .9 degrees Fahrenheit annually while the low temperature is rising about .2 F degrees annually. Also, he says the record high temperatures for each month have occurred in the last 15 years, while the record low temperatures were all prior to that time period.

Sexton, an avid birder as well, has seen a change in nature as a result of the temperature rise.

“Some birds that used to come down this far to the Bay Area, don’t come anymore,” he says.

President’s doubts

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has stayed out of the wrangle by taking no official stance. The current GCSAA president, however, has an opinion.

Robert Randquist, CGCS, the head superintendent at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, Fla., doubts climate change. Randquist says his degree in engineering makes him question the methods used to come up with their predictions.

“I have great reservations about the (computer) modeling,” Randquist says. “Weather modeling is 60 percent accuracy rate and it’s based on the same type of modeling.”

Randquist says he has yet to see incontrovertible proof that the rise in temperatures worldwide is caused by pollution and is not just a natural weather pattern.

He adds that climate change is a highly politicized topic.

“There are huge social and economic issues around it,” he says. “It depends on who’s in power. Our Congress can’t even make up its mind.”

Frequent fairway flooding

Four miles off the coast of New London, Conn., Fishers Island Club superintendent Donnie Beck has seen weather patterns evolve, and his 14th fairway is the indisputable proof.

Now in his 18th year at Fishers, 11th as superintendent, Beck has detected a change in the frequency, intensity and time of flooding. He used to have to deal with a high tide once a year.

“Now it’s four or five times a year and they’re getting bigger every season,” he sighs.

As a result, he has begun an intense topdressing program to add three quarters of an inch a year to the fairway.

Continued on page 20

Continued from page 19

The timing of the flooding is also moving. Beck remembers when the wind, moon and high tides only drove water up onto his 14th in early December, occasionally in late November.

“It used to come when the grass was dormant. What it seems like lately is it’s coming in late October,” he says.

After repeated instances of fairway turf being killed by the saltwater in recent years, he has sodded part of the hole with Paspalum.

While Beck is sure the weather is in a state of flux, he is not convinced of the cause, not since talking with Herb Stevens, owner and sole employee of Grass Roots Weather, a Rhode Island-based forecasting service for superintendents.

“Two years ago I would have sworn by it,” Beck says of man’s role. Now he’s not sure if it’s human effect or cycles.

The Skiing Weatherman

Herb Stevens, known for 23 years on television as “The Skiing Weatherman,” started Grass Roots Weather in 2003.

Stevens rejects the notion that rising temperatures have anything to do with carbon emissions in the atmosphere. He even dismisses the computer modeling used for conventional weather forecasting. For his service, Stevens relies on a two-prong method to aid superintendents who he says get no benefit from

THE AMOUNT OF CO₂ PRODUCED IN ONE YEAR, STEVENS SAYS, WOULD EQUAL THE THICKNESS OF ONE FLOOR TILE IF THE ATMOSPHERE WAS THE HEIGHT OF A 100-STORY BUILDING.

the point-and-click overnight forecasts on which many rely.

His first method is what he calls pattern recognition, using the knowledge he’s acquired from 30 years in the business.

“I’ve seen a lot of cold fronts come and go,” he says.

The second technique for Stevens is what he calls “analogue forecasting.”

“You go back in time and find situations where global indicators set up to what is going on now,” he says.

For him, sun spot activity and ocean temperatures are important parts of the equation.

When it comes to climate predictions, Stevens refutes the methods used by those who say emissions are altering the weather.

“The globe has been warming since the end of the little Ice Age, but man had nothing to do with it,” he says. “The computer models do not take into account, to any great extent, the fluctuations of the oceans and sun

as far as temperature.”

Stevens calls the concern over CO₂ a “non-starter,” stating that the amount of the gas produced in one year is equal to the thickness of one floor tile if the atmosphere was the height of a 100-story building.

Stevens also says there is a conspiracy among institutions of higher learning to perpetuate the myth of man being behind the elevating temperatures.

One Mann’s opinion

One of those members of the academic community drawing Stevens’ ire is Professor Michael Mann, director, Earth System Science Center at the Penn State Meteorology Department.

Mann was part of the Climate Research Unit email controversy, known as “Climategate,” that occurred in 2009. Thousands of emails and documents from the University of East Anglia’s Climate Research Unit were stolen and illegally made public. They were purported to show that climatologists around the world were manipulating data to bolster their conclusions that mankind is causing temperatures to rise. Investigations into the accusations showed the information in emails were manipulated to falsely portray the conversation of scientists.

Penn State launched an investigation into Mann. He was cleared by

Continued on page 22

At the Meadow Club in Fairfax, Calif., David Sexton, Director of Grounds, says he’s seen a change in climate and wildlife in his 29 years at the course.