

## BILL ROBERTS REPLIES:

Dear Mr. Finlen:

I appreciate your time on the phone today and wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate you, again, on your editorial in the May 1992 issue of the "Heart Beat". I share your frustration with the nebulous tone of the "lawn care advertisements that play every spring." Your assertion that "our association and its members must be pro-active rather than reactive" states, precisely, the posture that the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has maintained ever since we assumed the leadership role in defining golf's impact on the environment.

We came into this discussion with a high degree of credibility and our ability to deal in the legislative and regulatory arenas at the federal level is a direct result of the credibility. More tangibly, we have the programs and participation to prove that we, as an organization of individual golf course superintendents, are concerned about environmental integrity. We have, through the years, declined to join in "industry coalitions" simply because our motivations,

the conditions under which we practice our profession and our ability to quantify qualification have been somewhat singular. Hence, at the national level anyway, we have not been "associated with all of them". I am not being critical of the rest of the industry, simply stating that it has been and will be in the best interest of golf and golf course superintendents to maintain that autonomy.

Your assertion that we "regulate ourselves" is timely and of particular importance as we discuss significant organizational changes for GCSAA which will be voted on in Anaheim. In these times of increasingly stringent environmental legislation, workplace regulation and employment qualification, it has become prudent and may become necessary to "define" more fully just what is involved in professional criteria. The question then becomes one of whom is in the best position to arrive at and most practically implement such a definition.

It is apparent that GCSAA, with all due respect to more than 107 different local chapters, is in the best position to arrive at those conclusions that can be most easily communicated and adopted by legislators, regulators, owners and

club officials. One-hundred and seven different definitions is chaos and no further definition is simply short-sighted. Empowerment of GCSAA's elected leadership, recognition of the right of individual members to participate in the election process, prudent utilization of the input generated by our committee process and implementation of the new "field staffing" network will go a long way toward strengthening our position professionally. If we, as a national association, are in a position to set our own standards then we are in a position to strengthen our value to the industry, to the game of golf, to the marketplace and to society and that is the ultimate benefit of membership.

The issues you have raised are timely, of major importance and deserving of a focused, mature discussion and your editorial has done much to further this all important dialogue. Thank you, again, for your interest in these matters and for your overall concern for professional affiliation.

Sincerely,  
Bill Roberts, President  
GCSAA

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