



CMAA CULPABLE

By Monroe S. Miller

If there is an issue that has dominated the business of golf course management in America the past decade, few would argue that issue has been pesticide use.

Few would argue, either, that our efforts to address the issues and the problems have been formidable, impressive and very responsible. Programs and attending changes at the club, local, state and national levels of golf course management have been eminently successful.

And it's been noticed. From our involvement in legislative change to participation in areas like the Audubon Society program to individual golf course management practices, we have been applauded and congratulated by many.

Many, but not by a group known as the CMAA. In case you don't know, that is a national organization many clubhouse managers belong to—Club Managers Association of America.

In the July/August 1993 issue of their official publication—*CLUB MANAGEMENT*—is an article entitled "The Greening of the Greens". The article is innocuous; what's memorable is the accompanying artwork. In full color, you—a golf course superintendent—are portrayed as the grim reaper, complete with sickle and 55 gallons of "Greenskeeper in a Drum".

If you haven't seen this despicable, nefarious display in the CMAA magazine, call me. I'll send you a full color copy. Trust me—you won't believe it.

A lot of questions come to mind. Foremost is "why would a group with whom we have some shared interest choose to insult us and portray us like this?" "How could anyone be so cruel, so empty-headed, stupid and thoughtless?"

What would happen if we did to them what they did to us—print a crude stereotype of a clubhouse manager in *GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT* magazine?

Can you hear the howls of protest if they opened a copy of our magazine and saw themselves portrayed as someone with, shall we say, confused sexuality? Or, how often have we heard the integrity of a clubhouse manager questioned by members? Let's amplify that stereotype with artwork featuring a CMAA member walking out the back door of the club with a case of booze and a box of steaks. Would the CMAA view that caricature of them with favor? Likely not.

Or, how would they like it if we showed them, in our official publication, as some buffoon with pursed lips ready to plant a big kiss on the tail of a customer, illustrating their best management expertise? Or with one hand in the till while smiling at a member?

They would scream foul play.

Let's face it—we could have a field day doing to them what they did to us. They are, as a group, an easy mark.

Of course, no one is suggesting we stoop to such low

depths. There is no justification for answering a wrong in that way.

Still, the question that keeps coming back is "why?" For a group so susceptible to the same treatment as they are, to do as they have done is incredible and shows incredibly bad judgment.

At our club, the PGA professional has been in residence for 22 years. I have served them 21 years. And in my time, we have had over a dozen clubhouse managers of every description, CMAA members all. Two were competent. Among the rest were drunks, thieves, incompetents and yes, one with confused sexuality. This experience with clubhouse managers is repeated in other clubs more often than not, in my observations.

So where does a crowd like this get the unmitigated gall to publish such an odious picture of us?

The *CLUB MANAGEMENT* magazines that are on the end tables in vestibules and reception areas and lounges and lockerrooms are seen by golfers and non-golfers alike. An ugly stereotype of us has been perpetuated. But so has a misconception of pesticides.

Like it or not, they are critical to golf course management. CMAA members would do well to read, for example, a piece like that of Dr. Kane elsewhere in *THE GRASS ROOTS*. Many CMAA members depend on golf for a living, just like we do. What these dolts have done, to some degree, is hurt themselves. Not very bright and very unprofessional.

We have to accept reality, though. The damage has been done and a lot more work will be required to undo it.

But we must ask ourselves, "what should we do?" We, in this context, of course means the GCSAA.

Has the GCSAA done anything about the appearance of this article yet?

You probably will be surprised to learn, as far as I can find out, that the answer is a deafening NO. The picture came out in the July/August issue and when I called GCSAA director Dave Fearis in late September, he hadn't even seen it. And he works for the CMAA on occasion! Presumably, few other directors or officers had seen it either.

"And what," I asked Dave on about October 15th, "have you guys done?"

Again, as near as I could tell from his response, they hadn't done a thing. Rod Johnson asked vice president Baidy the same question in Lawrence and got the same answer (but Rod isn't sure, either).

The response of GCSAA (actually, the lack of one) to date is as incredible as the appearance of the artwork in *CLUB MANAGEMENT*. And if it goes much longer, their inaction will be just as irresponsible.

The GCSAA needs to overcome its impotence and politically correct attitude and hit the CMAA officers, directors and staff over their collective head with a two by four. The CMAA owes us an apology, period. They also owe us an explanation of a publication policy that allows repugnant insults like this one in their official magazine.

That letter of apology needs to appear in a prominent place in *GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT*.

Members of the GCSAA need to hold the officers' and directors' feet to the fire to fulfill their responsibility to force CMAA to correct this horrible wrong.

If they fail to secure that apology, we'd better not see any CMAA representatives at the head table during our 1994 Conference in Dallas.

Should both CMAA and GCSAA officials fail these, then members will have to take matters in hand.

My proposal is simple, will be effective and give them similar embarrassment. Here it is: should the CMAA executive director and the CMAA president be on hand at the head table at our annual banquet in Dallas, 200 members will stand and jeer their presence when they are introduced.

Can we get 200 members to do that? I wondered that myself, and after a few phone calls around the country I am convinced we can get that many and likely more. Easily.

None of this would be necessary if the CMAA had a shred of professionalism, a little bit of sensitivity and some common sense. But what happened, happened.

They have an obligation to apologize. If they do not, our representatives must make a move to correct the wrong.

Should they fail, then we must act. It is a simple matter of integrity. ♣

Preemption Bill Delayed

By Monroe S. Miller

As we go to press with this issue of *THE GRASS ROOTS*, the legislation which would establish state preemption of pesticide use has hit a road block.

AB607/SB359 had been on a fast track to passage in this session of the legislature. It had cleared the Assembly on October 19th on a vote of 60 to 38, and seemed headed for amendments and passage in the Senate during the week of October 25th.

That was until Sen. Robert Cowles of Green Bay requested Sen. Alan Lasee of DePere to stop consideration of the bill until next year. Cowles chairs the Senate Environment and Energy Committee, and Lasee is chairman of the Senate Committee on Transportation, Agriculture, Local and Rural Affairs.

Cowles wants more time "for different groups to get their message out."

It would seem to many of us that there has been ample time for that.

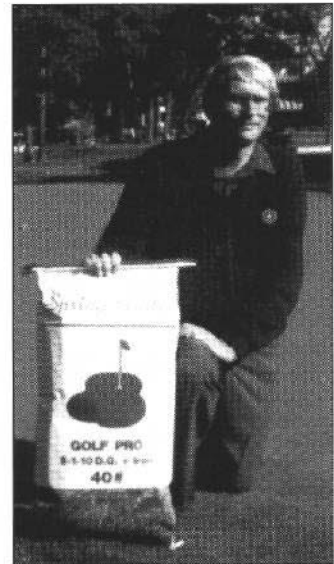
Russ Weisensel of the F/RoW/T Coalition and the Wisconsin Agri-Business Council are working to move the legislation forward. We will report on the results.

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