



## ANSWERS

December 7, 1993

Monroe S. Miller  
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P.O. Box 5129  
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Dear Monroe,

This is my first response to requests you have made for such in *THE GRASS ROOTS*. I am submitting to you my answers and thoughts to your latest editorial "Further Questions I'd Like Answers To..." from the Nov/Dec 1993 issue. I do not profess to have all the answers, but I am somewhat opinionated nonetheless.

So, in the words of the forever trendsetting New Orleans Saints football fans: "whoompf...there it is!"

Sincerely,  
David C. Van Auken

1. "Affordable" in our industry is pretty much out of the question. Next.

2. Just because technological advances continue at a tremendous pace does not mean that current devices are obsolete. The initial design was at the time compatible with what was needed then. If it still works, don't fix it. The only thing that I can imagine outdating an irrigation system is expansion, or the need for more stringent conservation measures which is indeed a reality of the very near future.

3. Much is indeed lost after the sale is completed.

4. It's true that much could be learned from the automobile industry.

5. It depends upon the scope of the project. The larger scale endeavors are more efficiently handled by someone equipped to do so. On the other hand, attention to detail is unsurpassed when done in-house. I find a combination to work best. The contractor easily progresses through the "rough" stuff and we save dollars by "tuning" it in.

6. The majority must call in advance. Many do as a matter of courtesy. It's those that I welcome unannounced.

7. For years.

8. Tough call here. I think the rollers came out a little early last year, before the "trend" had established itself. I look for increased marketing of the same products here. The fully enclosed spray rigs were to me the beginning of something BIG. Safer pesticide use and handling will always be at the forefront of our industry, and rightly so. I think injection units will soon come of age.

9. We have. As with any type of aerification, the results tend to be long term. The surface disruption is everything they promote it to be—non-existent. In conjunction with a strong topdressing program, our core aerifying of greens (sand-based) may become a thing of the past. We'll have to

wait and see. I've had good results combating hydrophobic areas with the hydrojet on both sand and soil based turf-grass, as well as a little bit of preventative medicine for our high traffic areas.

10. SLOW PLAY.

11. The word "biggest" usually lends itself to a singular event or thing. For that reason I'm having a hard time with this one. Our biggest challenge of the year was combating the extremely wet spring because of our low proximity to the county's largest river. The flooding and silt deposits were abhorable.

12. Politics and ego. (Just a thought)

13. Yes, along with some take-all patch and, of course, dollar spot.

14. Yes. Yes, quality is always at the mercy of quantity.

15. I think we'd have to start with a faucet that never drips, light bulbs that never burn out and employees who are happy to work forever without a raise. Does that put it in perspective?

16. Perhaps as a means by which our organization can further support the industry for which we stand. If the club is floundering, we may have kept it afloat for at least a little while longer, which in turn has kept one of our own employed. If the money is clearly going into someone else's pocket, good question!

17. No, I did not, thankfully.

18. Yes, I had the opportunity to speak with Bruce at this year's Turf Symposium, shortly after he passed the gavel on. It was meant sincerely and I believe received the same. As a side note, congratulating Mr. Rod Johnson on his achievements and subsequent recognition was also a pleasure for me.

19. No. If this is in fact a reality, then those who fit this category should be embarrassed, deeply ashamed and willing to look inside themselves to bring about change.

20. Boy! Where do I start? The introduction of that pricey new grass, a.k.a. *Poa supina*, will I hope provide for some interesting research and hopefully support its reputation. I like the work going on with the organic amendments, PRGs are always interesting and controlling disease organically is fascinating. How about something on organic-based machine fluids that would not severely injure turf? (This would alleviate the need for question 15)

21. How can something that never ends be renewed?

22. No. The signage has had little impact on our operation.

23. Sales is a very competitive business and precipitates change.

24. When we speak out about it. It's the same concerning our involvement in government. No one hears when you complain in your living room.

25. This question is an excellent lead for how I wanted to end this little editorial. I wish to take you up on your offer to forward a copy—color won't be necessary. You see, it seems as though we have run out of paper in the ShopKat's litter box! 🐾