(Continued from page 19)
figure why bright and successful people lose all common sense when they get behind the wheel of a golf car. I simply accepted that fact a long time ago and nowadays try to herd traffic where damage will be the least.

Dave readied equipment for the second round of work that would happen after the mid-morning break.

And, as happens a lot of mornings, I went to my office to get a stimpmeter to check some greens after they were cut. I expected some grousing today about slow grass, despite the fact that all the walkers had just been sharpened and backlapped.

No sooner had I started down the hill toward the course a horn blew. I turned around to see who or what it was. A jet black Ford three-quarter ton pickup had pulled up to our shop—I knew it was Sandy Grant.

"What in the world is he doing here?" I thought to myself. He had someone with him, someone with trooper shades on. The passenger door opened and out stumbled Bogey Calhoun.

Now I was really curious. "What are you characters up to?" I asked with some sarcasm. "Don't you have any work to do?"

Sandy hitched his jeans up, put on a pair of sunglasses and strolled down toward my cart. Bogey wandered into the shop for a few minutes. He's one of the nosiest people I have ever met and I swear that every time he comes over he checks out what is going on in our buildings. I didn't mind terribly although at times his brashness is annoying.

"Mendota Bay is so wet that we will never open for play today," Sandy offered as he got closer. "I returned some Milorganite I had borrowed from Bogey. He helped me unload it and when I told him I was coming over here, he asked to ride along. You know how he is."

By then Bogey was standing next to my cart.

"What's the deal, Bogey?" I asked. "Is Shady Dell CC closed today, too?"

"No, we're open for walkers. But there is so damn much grass to cut that nobody will get in any trouble if I am gone for a little while. There didn't seem to be any disease active earlier, so I figured I could afford to see how you're doing."

The stimpmeter was on the seat next to me. The "nose" had to ask me what I was going to do with it.

"I'm going to use it as a pry bar to raise a sprinkler head. What the hell do you think I'm going to use it for, Bogey?"

"That is about all it is good for. After all that rain and the humidity, you should know all greens around Wisconsin will be lagging today."

"I'm aware of that," I replied with some irritation. "I just want to know for myself. I am going to see how much roll I'll get with the second cut I am making this morning."

"You're lucky that's how you get to use it," Sandy said, finally coming into the conversation. "I have to post daily stimpmeter readings in the vestibule outside the pro shop entrance. It's a stressful, miserable responsibility."

Bogey groaned. "That's ridiculous," he said. "The thing wasn't designed to foster fast greens competition among clubs, but that is what has happened in some places. Like here in town.

Sandy and Tom Morris were the two I knew who had to post daily stimp readings. I suspected there were more.

The fast grass syndrome has affected most areas but seemed con-

centrated in larger metro areas among the private clubs.

"They all want braggin' rights," Bogey claimed as we visited more about the prospect of fast greens in hot and humid and wet weather like this. "The stimpmeter is an accomplice in the fast greens contest some clubs have entered," Bogey said.

Of course we all know how the stimpmeter evolved and what its intentions originally were—a management tool. Somehow that has been only a part of its use.

"Have you heard the story about the stimpmeter and the British Open?" I asked Bogey and Sandy. Neither had.

"Shaig Logan, the late greenkeeper at Muirfield Golf Club in Southpoint, England, was handed a stimpmeter before the British Open began there a number of years ago. Logan looked at it and appeared dumfounded.

"What's this for?" he asked.

Somebody told him it was used to measure the speed of the greens.

"Why would I want to do that?" he asked.

So all the greens have the same speed he was told.

"Why would I want to do that?" Logan asked.

So the sixth green isn't faster than the fifth, the twelfth isn't slower than the eleventh, and so on, he was told.

"Laddie," Logan said, "that's why you plan a practice round."

I thought Bogey and Sandy were going to cry they laughed so hard.

"Wouldn't it be super if that is what we went back to doing?" Sandy asked.

"That is a good story, fellas," Bogey said. "But here's one for you that I witnessed with my own eyes."

He went on. "A few years ago—actually, quite a few—a USGA Green Section agronomist was invited to a gathering of superintendents to try to soothe over their anger about all the troubles this new fangled implement had foisted upon them.

"When he was all done—and a lot of those in the audience didn't buy what he was saying—he was called back to the podium to receive a small gift as thanks for driving over to speak. The gift? A brand new stimpmeter and a five pound jar of Vasoline. The implications were obvious!"

"I have heard that story, Bogey, and wondered if there was any truth to it. Now I know." It was a story I have wanted to repeat but couldn't since I was sure of its veracity.

"It is true," Bogey replied. "I saw it with my own eyes."

"Well," Sandy slowly started, "I've got a little less dramatic story to tell, but it shows how frustrating the fascination some players have with green speed can be for a golf course superintendent. I would just as soon neither of you repeats this story. It quickly becomes part of the gossip mill."

"We won't," Bogey and I replied at the same instant. We wanted to hear more.

"You both know how quiet and deliberate Tom Morris is. Well, I've got a surprise for you—I have seen him when he was madder than a wet hornet.

"I was standing inside his shop, outside his office door, one afternoon a few years ago. He drove up to the shop quickly in a Cushman, shut it off and before he took a full step he launched his stimpmeter into the shop. It looked like a boomerang until it hit the far wall and fell to the concrete floor with a loud, hollow clang.

"Tom didn't see me and I didn't say anything. Too surprised, I guess.

"He went over, picked it up and in one move banged it into the big vise on the workbench that went from one corner of the shop to the other. With his other hand he spun the jaws tightly shut with the stimpmeter parallel to the ground. The vice clamped it on the ball end.

"Tom stepped over, carefully unraveled the oxygen and acetylene hoses, screwed the cutting tip onto the torch and lit the flame. He then put the face protection on, snapped the green visor down and turned the oxygen up. He had one helluva a flame.

"And then, with full deliberation, he cut the stimpmeter in two. Sparks and molten aluminum were jumping from the bar. When the unclamped end hit the floor, he flipped up the green visor and took the face protection off. He turned the oxygen down carefully and then shut off the acetylene.

"A look of smug satisfaction came across his face. He glanced over and saw me."

"How long have you been there?" he asked.

"Long enough to see you know how to use a cutting torch. What are you doing?" I asked.

"Tom went on to tell me the green committee chairman from Maple Leaf had played at Pumpkin Hollow CC and called to report PHCC's greens were faster than MLCC's were. He sent Tom out to stimp theirs and insisted he call back with the numbers.

"Tom did what he was told, but before he called he cut the stimpmeter into two pieces. He told me 'now I'll have a few days of peace. It will take three weeks to get another stimpmeter from Far Hills.'"

Bogey and I got a kick out of the story but really felt sorry for Tom and the frustration that caused him to do something totally out of his character.

I considered telling my friends a true story that would top theirs. It was better than anything a premier fiction writer could dream up. It was so good I decided to share it but leave the superintendent nameless.

"Listen up, guys, you won't want to miss a word of this. I'm not going to tell you who did this, so don't ask me or bug me about it. Suffice to say he is someone you all know, and the course he manages is top notch. You've both been there.

"His green committee chairman hounded him until he got his request—his own stimpmeter.

"The superintendent was constantly hassled about green speed and only half cooperated with the stimpmeter posting. It was a classic case of being caught between the bark and the wood—complaining if you do post and the numbers aren't big enough, and complaining when you don't post at all. What was supposed to be a daily task might have gotten done twice a week.

"And on those days he did post, there was usually a lot of complaining, which made him even more reluctant

to post the green speeds. And he refused to fudge the numbers.

"That's what led the chairman to insist on his own stimpmeter to carry in his golf bag.

"Well, he got his own stimpmeter. In fact, he got one of a kind. Seems our buddy spent a fair amount of time that previous winter having a "special" stimpmeter made at a machine shop.

"It was almost exactly like the real McCoy—a machining process was used that even resulted in the same surface striations. He figured out how to match the burnished color of the aluminum used in the USGA model. The bevel was perfect and the ball released at the same precise angle of an original.

"There was one small difference—it was six inches longer! It wasn't enough to notice—when he showed it to me and asked if I saw anything different, it looked the same as mine.

"Man oh man, did that extra length add to the ball roll! He picked up well over a foot.

"The fact that the readings were made and subsequently posted by the green committee chairman gave full credibility to the numbers.

"Immediately, the bitching and griping stopped. The greens weren't any faster, but the numbers were bigger.

"It was a huge risk to take, and you have to admire his courage. He has a near permanent albeit subtle smile on his face. His life is better; the players think he is a hero these days. And all he had to do was lengthen his stimpmeter!"

The guys accused me of fiction. "I couldn't make anything that good up in my mind," was my honest reply.

It seemed to us there was justice. The stimpmeter was designed to give an empirical method of measuring green speed that would discount opinion. A handful of golfers at many golf facilities seem bent on perverting that pure and helpful intent.

And leave it to a resourceful superintendent to overcome the unreasonable even irresponsible demands of a small minority of players. He did it in a way that was painless for him, the golfers and, most of all, the golf course. We didn't even think about the insignificant "ethics" that might be in play.

So Sandy, Bogey and I headed back to the shop. Despite the oppressive heat and humidity, we were in a good mood that would last all day.

I had a feeling the stimpmeters were going to stay on the shelf for a few days.

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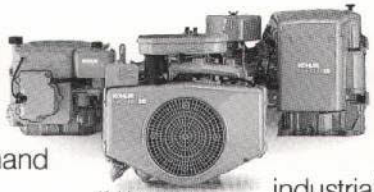

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Audubon Highlights Spring Business Meeting

By Kris Pinkerton

Seventy-five members attended this year's spring educational and business meeting held in Fond du Lac, Monday, February 28.

The speakers for the session were Ms. Jean Mckay, Mr. Phil Bailey, and Mr. Carl Stenbol.

Jean Mckay, staff ecologist for the New York Audubon Society, led off the morning program with good background information on the "Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses." Jean stated that, "The New York Audubon Society, non-affiliated with other Audubons, takes a pro-active approach of working with golf courses in improving the quality of the environment." Not all other Audubons do!

The Audubon Program currently has 900 golf courses involved; 19 are from Wisconsin.

Jean also enlightened attendees in the process of joining the Audubon Society and the various requirements for becoming a Certified Cooperative Sanctuary.

Phil Bailey, from Ozaukee Country Club, took to the podium next. Phil's topic, "Ozaukee Country Club's quest for becoming a Certified Sanctuary."

"Showing the public that golf courses are necessary and safe green spaces in an ever growing community was one of the reasons why Ozaukee C.C. joined the Audubon Program," stated Phil. From public involvement to recycling, Phil shared with us the steps taken for certification in the various categories.

Currently Ozaukee C.C. is certified in 6 of the 7 categories and on their way to being the first fully certified golf course in our state. Job well done!

Carl Stenbol finished out the morning session in an informative matter. Stenbol, a compliance specialist for the State Emergency Response Board, began by describing the goals of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), also known as Sara Title III. After brief discussions on the various sections of the EPCRA, Carl spent most of his time on annual reporting requirements for extremely hazardous substances.

While asking the audience, "How many of you have filed your Wis. Tier Two Emergency and Hazardous Chemical Inventory due March 1?", Carl turned and covered his eyes!

After lunch, the spring business meeting was called to order. Highlights were as follows:

1. President Michael Semler spoke of the completion of funding for the 10,000 sq. ft. putting green at the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research Center. Mike added that, "WGCSA is on the verge of funding our own research study for Wisconsin Superintendents."

2. Vice-President Mark Kienert, also reporting as a chapter delegate, gave a short summary from the GCSAA annual meeting held in Dallas, Texas on February 7. Only two of the proposed 15 bylaws amendments failed. They pertained to new classifications for Class D members and Club Officials. Mark also reported that Scott Woodhead, Tommy Witt, and Paul McGinnis were elected to the board of directors.

3. Treasurer Pat Norton handed out the 1993 financial statement and reviewed the proposed budget for 1994.

4. Joe Kuta recognized twenty-five year members Dale Marach and Don Steinmetz. Hats off to these gentlemen!

The S&R committee presented the 1994 scholarship and research proposals for membership approval. After some discussion, membership passed the following disbursements as follows:

Agri Business Dues	$200
F/RoW/T	$800
J.R. Love Scholarship	$500
O.J. Noer Foundation	$500
Robert Trent Jones (GCSAA)	$500
USGA Foundation	$500
WISE	$500
WTA Research Fund	$10,000 *
TOTAL	**$13,500**

*Represents a four year commitment at $10,000/year.

USGA GREENS

By Monroe S. Miller

Answers on page 31

It seems like every new golf course these days is laying claim to USGA greens. Most of those making these claims aren't the golf course superintendents at the facilities involved. Usually those who are telling the whole world about their USGA Green Section greens likely don't have a clue to what Green Section specifications really are. Also guilty are some (emphasis on **SOME**) architects, builders, blenders and sand suppliers.

I can't forgive anyone for diminishing the meaning of a true USGA Green Section specification putting green. Developers, ad agencies, real estate people, et. al. often boast out of ignorance. The rest of those I mentioned, however, cannot be forgiven; they know better. Or should.

Take this quiz to see if you are well informed about Green Section specs. If golf course superintendents aren't precise about these specs, no one will be.

1. A new golf course advertises in a popular golf journal that it has modified USGA greens. Is there such a thing?

2. You are visiting with a golf course architect about a new golf course he's designed and that is nearly built. You ask him if he built USGA greens and he replied "absolutely". Since you are curious about how the coarse sand layer was spread and how much it cost for 20 greens, you press for details. The architect says "we left out the coarse sand layer." You reply that he, therefore, doesn't have a golf course with USGA greens. The architect is indignant.

Who is right—you or the architect?

3. You've had your golf course architect design a new golf green as part of your course's master plan implementation. Final plans are in hand, a contractor is scheduled and material is starting to arrive in your shop yard.

A triaxle rolls in with a load of sand, and you meet the driver with a nest of bronze screens. You tell him, "don't unload until I've screened a composite sample. If it doesn't meet the USGA specs, you'll have to haul this back to the sand supplier." Among other things, the driver says, "you are crazy."

Are you?

4. You send two 80/20 blends to a soil testing laboratory on a USGA approved list and ask them to recommend the better of the two blends. All field construction done at this point is to USGA specs. You therefore can rightfully claim USGA greens once the lab tells you which blend is best and the greens are built from that material, right?

5. You send several sand samples and a number of organic amendments to a soils testing lab you have faith in and that has USGA approval. Your instructions are for the lab to develop an 80/20 blend that meets USGA physical specifications. The lab gets back to you that the best they can do is a mix with a perc test of 3.45" water per hour, and suggest that it's "close enough".

Is it?

6. During a preconstruction meeting the contractor tells you of his plan to rototill sand and peat on-site. The architect doesn't seem to object?

Should you?

7. The new golf course you've been hired to manage is a beehive of activity, and you cannot be in a dozen places at once. So you find yourself watching everything from glue joints to putting green construction. You pull up to a new green that laborers are finishing raking for seed. You carefully cut, randomly, several places and measure the depth of the topmix. It is only nine to ten inches thick, so you stop that operation and get the construction superintendent over immediately. You point out the shortage of material and he tries to convince you that 10 uncompacted inches is sufficient.

Should you cave in to his argument?

8. The coarse is under construction on a very nice piece of property that is particularly well drained. The owner wants to leave out the tile in the greens, claiming it would be a waste of money.

Can he do that?

9. What are the grassing requirements for a USGA Green Section green?

10. Are USGA Green Section specification greens guaranteed?

Is It CHEAPER or BETTER?

By Bob Vavrek
Agronomist, USGA Green Section
Great Lakes Region

Throughout the winter the Great Lakes Green Section office receives a considerable amount of literature about new products and new management procedures. We also make it a point to visit exhibitors at numerous regional turf conferences and the GCSAA national convention. We are approached by salesman after salesman who have sometimes modest, but often unrealistic claims regarding the benefits of their products. Turf growth regulators, growth enhancers, plant hormones, insect pheromones, BT, XYZs—if we didn't know better, we would wonder how golf course superintendents ever managed to maintain high quality turf using only sound fertilization/irrigation management and sensible cultural practices.

Many sales representatives realize that the Green Section agronomists make Turf Advisory Service visits at well over 1,800 golf courses each season. From a marketing standpoint, "selling" an agronomist a new product may be more productive that "selling" to individual superintendents. As a group, the Green Section agronomists make a serious effort to keep abreast of new technology and products. However, one of the primary reasons superintendents utilize the Turf Advisory Service is that we strive to maintain an unbiased attitude. We generally suggest the tried and true turf management techniques and products, and only mention the use of relatively untested treatments on an experimental basis or as a last ditch effort when all else fails. It is undeniably a conservative attitude because recommendations made in our reports to subscribers are taken seriously. It should come as no surprise, then, that those who develop and invent new products often believe that the USGA doesn't give new products a fair shake.

The only claim to fame for some, but not all, new products are testimonials. Unfortunately, replicated scientific research data is often sought only after the products are being sold to golf course superintendents. Testimonials are easier to publish and much less expensive than funding research at a well respected university's Turfgrass Management Department. Yes, it's much more difficult deciphering data tables, least significant differences, and graphs than simply believing the testimonials of John Smith of Megabucks Country Club. But you can bet John didn't achieve his level of success by blindly following other superintendents' testimonials.

Be wary of demonstration plots and the results of field research that only represent one season of data. For example, abnormal weather patterns may produce misleading results. Any turf scientist worth his or her salt knows that the most reliable conclusions are drawn from data collected from varying locations over several years. Just as important is the concept of reproducibility. When other turf researchers cannot reproduce the results of a particular study using similar experimental techniques, we have a problem.

The problem is consistency. Many researchers are hesitant to endorse new products such as biostimulants, thatch reducers, soil conditioners, etc. because the results are inconsistent. Sometimes they work—hence the testimonials—and sometimes they don't. In contrast, an application of 1/2 lb. of urea to a putting green at Milwaukee Country Club will generally produce the same response as a similar application made to a green at Chicago Golf Club, or Hazeltine National, or Crooked Stick, and so on.

Let's assume that a new product produces consistent results. My next question is, "is it cheaper or better than that already being used on the golf course?" Why "fix" a sound maintenance program if it isn't broken? An example: a year or two ago several superintendents had success treating localized dry spots on collars of greens by coring with large diameter tines and then fill the holes with a porous sand substitute. Other superintendents had similar success by coring and then filling the holes with sand. You cannot deny that the new product helped relieve the problem. My argument is that sand produced similar results and is much cheaper than the widely publicized substitute.

Considering the recent advances in bio-engineering and other technology related to turf management, there will undoubtedly be and already are some very useful products on the market. Our task will be to separate the snake oils from the products that truly provide consistent beneficial effects. Look past the slick marketing blitz and demand unbiased scientific data instead of testimonials. Keep in mind that results from experiments made at several locations and by different researchers are much more reliable than the results from a single research station located a thousand miles from your golf course. Finally, if you're convinced that a product works, then ask the question: "is it cheaper or better than my current treatment?" Let's not stick our head in the sand regarding the potential benefits of new products, but demand accountability from the producers. In many ways, your job depends on it.

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He's Creating Tomorrow's Turfgrasses Today

By Lori Ward Bocher

Noted turfgrass researcher M.C. (Milt) Engelke skillfully shoe-horned an abundance of intriguing information into our one-hour conversation. A native of Wisconsin, he currently is a Professor of Turfgrass Breeding, Genetics and Management at Texas A&M University's Dallas Research and Extension Center.

But, turfgrass aside, I'll start with a newsy bit of information. Earlier this year Milt was married to another plant breeder, Dr. Virginia Lehman of Loft Seeds. "I hope this comes as a pleasant surprise to everyone in Wisconsin," Milt reveals. Dr. Lehman spoke at the Wisconsin Turf Conference in 1993.

Now on to more academic matters. With a 100 percent research assignment at Texas A&M, Milt's primary emphasis is to breed and develop turfgrasses that are environmentally adaptive. He is especially interested in zoysiagrass and creeping bentgrass and has had several plant variety releases with his name attached.

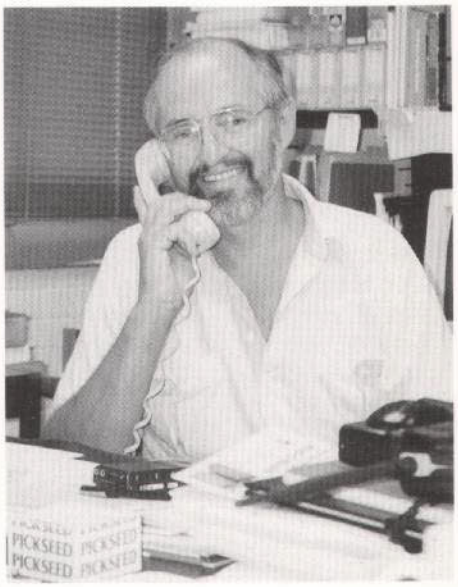
"How do you go about developing a new grass variety?" I ask.

"Our principle concentration is to identify and develop plant materials that have biological characteristics which are compatible with natural environmental conditions," he explains. "We want a plant that can exist in the environment without a lot of special care. And so our principle areas of interest are with temperature and moisture extremes as well as biological pest resistance."

"I'm not familiar with zoysiagrass," I admit.

"Lori, you are familiar with it," he counters. "Ever see the miracle grass advertised in the Sunday supplements? That's zoysia. Unfortunately, that ad often runs in areas of the country where it shouldn't, and Wisconsin is one of those areas."

Zoysiagrass is native to the Pacific Rim countries. "It is one of two warm season grasses that has a tremendous ability to grow across a very broad latitude," he says, adding that it even can be found in Wisconsin. "It's also adaptable to soil conditions that range from very acid to alkaline, and moisture requirements that range from 1 inch to 20 inches of rain per month.



M.C. "Milt" Engelke

"We've got a lot of genetic diversity within that zoysia genus that allows us to be able to identify genes for salt tolerance, cold hardiness, low water use, diseases resistance and insect resistance," he points out.

Milt doesn't recommend zoysiagrass for Wisconsin. "You have other plants that probably are better," he points out. "But the further south you move from Wisconsin, the more you'll see it being used in golf course fairways and home lawns.

"It is a tremendous grass for erosion control," he continues. "It requires a whole lot less water than cool season grasses; irrigation is just about optional. And we're finding a lot of golf course architects using zoysiagrasses for accent because they have a different color and appearance."

"Wisconsin superintendents probably will be more interested in your work with creeping bentgrasses," I interject.

"We just released two varieties (Cato Creeping Bentgrass and Crenshaw Creeping Bentgrass), and we're prepared to release a third, yet unnamed," he points out.

"How far south does bentgrass grow fairly easily?" I ask.

"Boy, that's a loaded question," Milt answers. "We can grow bentgrass in Houston, Texas and in Florida. But your qualifier of `easily?' I have to give a tremendous amount of credit to the golf course superintendent. A good superintendent can take a poor grass and make it grow anywhere. And a poor superintendent will kill the best thing that's out there. So it's highly dependent on the management level of the superintendent.

"We can grow repeatedly, and with great success, bentgrasses in the Dallas area," he continues. "And we're seeing it move further and further south on a routine basis."

"How do your new varieties make it easier to grow bentgrass in the south?" I wonder.

"With the old, reliable bentgrasses that we've been using, they lose their root system with summer stress," Milt explains. "So we concentrated on creating a plant that had a persistent, deep root system. That gave us a plant that had better heat tolerance and better tolerance to a lot of diseases."

"So these new varieties would be good for heat tolerance in the north, too, not just in the south?" I inquire.

"That's correct," he affirms. "We have to remember that these plants grow 365 days of the year. Even in Wisconsin or Canada we have days when the temperature exceeds the optimum environment for bentgrass. That's when these stress genes kick in and give the plant a competitive edge."

"How do you measure the success of a new variety?" I ask.

"Acceptance by the industry," he answers. "That usually takes several years. Right now Crenshaw Creeping Bentgrass is receiving considerable interest from all over the U.S., Europe and Japan. A lot of that, I'm afraid, is hype, and it will wear off. But it's been out there now for three years and still has a lot of steam. In the long run, its repeat performance will determine its ultimate success."

"Is your Crenshaw variety named after the golfer?" I ask.

"Yes, it is," Milt answers. "Ben Crenshaw has been a very close proponent of Bentgrass Research, Inc., and of our research program here at the Dallas Center. Many times when Ben would come back to our Center and walk out onto the many, many grasses, he always went back to this one grass. When we released it, he was gracious enough to allow us to put his name on it."

"This may sound a bit naive, but why the drive to have bentgrass on every golf course? Is there no substitute for it?" I ask.

"It's a little bit like everybody aspiring to drive a Cadillac," Milt believes. "Especially on the putting surface, creeping bentgrass provides one of the most consistently uniform and desirable putting surfaces. If you can have the best, then go for it.

"From a research standpoint," he continues, "one of the reasons we started working very heavily on the bentgrasses is that, traditionally, we experienced a fairly high proportion of a budget for a bentgrass golf course goes into fungicides or into labor associated with managing the plant in order for it to survive in an otherwise relatively hostile environment.

"By working on the genetics related to heat tolerance and to maintaining a deep root system, and by working on the genetics of disease resistance, we were able to substantially reduce the amount of cultural input required to get that plant to survive," Milt reveals. "Now we have the opportunity for lower-budget golf courses to utilize and be able to have the best, and also to be more environmentally conscious by using fewer chemicals."

"Do they cool bentgrass by misting it?" I ask.

"It's a process called syringing," he explains. "They'll put a light mist over the top of the bentgrass. That moisture will actually take a lot of the heat away from the plant. It is a stop- gap tool, used especially when the root system has died and the plant can no longer bring water up from the soil to cool itself."

"Tell us about Bentgrass Research, Inc.," I request.

"It's a member association with about 50 golf course members in 32 states," he explains. "Each golf course provides $1,000 a year, mostly from the golf course superintendent's budget. Those dollars are slated to come back to Texas A&M for doing bentgrass research. Over the last 10 years BRI has raised about $270,000."

"As a Texas A&M researcher, what are your ties to USGA?" I inquire.

"The USGA has an extensive grants program that was initiated in 1982," he explains. "Since 1982, they have provided approximately $3.5 million in turfgrass research. Most of that has been targeted toward developing new varieties and the corresponding management practices that go along with that.

"Between BRI and the USGA, I have received approximately $750,000 in the development of new bentgrasses since 1984," Milt continues. "Through the USGA I also have received approximately $600,000 in support of the development of zoysiagrass since 1984."

"I think of Dallas as an urbanized area," I point out. "Is your research center being squeezed in from all sides?"

"We're very much urbanized," Milt confirms. "When I came here 15 years ago I could still look out and see lots of fields. Today I see row after row of apartment complexes. So the city is moving in around us and we are feeling the squeeze.

"But the center is unique in that it was donated to Texas A&M by a private foundation," he continues. "And one of the stipulations was that this land could never be sold. So regardless of how much squeeze occurs, we will always exist."

He went on to explain that the center is used for turf and ornamental research related to urban environment problems. Of the eight scientists at the center, five work with turf. Milt does no teaching since all teaching is done at the main campus in College Station. But he is heavily involved with graduate students and post-doctoral programs. And he team-teaches a class on turfgrass identification and utilization at the GCSAA annual conference and a class on turfgrass management for the PGA.

Milt speaks at an average of 10 to 15 conferences a year. This year he spoke at the WTA Turf Expo — his first speaking engagement in Wisconsin. He is extremely impressed with what the turf industry has accomplished in Wisconsin.

"The Wisconsin Turfgrass Association has done an excellent job of promoting what has happened at the University of Wisconsin," he says, referring to the O.J. Noer Facility and the new faculty position. "What really excites me about the changes is that they were industry motivated. It took the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association to put together enough money for the Noer Facility and to put the political pressure on the University of Wisconsin System to say, `Hey, we want turf academic, research and extension positions to address our problems here.'"

"How does the Noer Facility compare to your Dallas Research Center?" I ask.

"When you built your facility in Wisconsin, you rivaled us," Milt admitted. "We've always thought of our turf research center as one of the best in the country, and the Wisconsin facility is second to none. You've got one of the best in the country and you've got