

# THRU THE GREEN

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER 1993

## THE MEETING PLACE

Our October meeting was at **Canyon Lakes Country Club** in San Ramon. The day was hosted by Superintendent **Bob Cox, CGCS**. Being the shy, retiring type that he is, Bob doesn't brag about his background. Many of you probably don't know that he is a former All-American at Notre Dame, a black belt in Karate, and a decorated water pilot.

He is currently in therapy to overcome his addiction to compulsive lying.

Actually, Bob is a former golf professional who "jumped to the other side" full time in 1980 at the

Vallejo Golf Club. He migrated to Tilden Park in 1983 and was the "grow in" superintendent at Delta View in 1989-90. He has been certified since 1986 and currently serves the association as a director.

Bob's current assignment is Canyon Lakes Country Club, a privately owned, daily-fee course which opened for play in 1987. The 18-hole course was designed by Ted Robinson and built under the supervision of J.D. Chastain, a former member of our society who passed away in 1991, God bless him.

The complex is owned by Kosaido, Inc., which owns

and operates 15 clubs throughout the world. Two are in the U.S., the other being Hillsdale CC in Chicago.

Canyon Lakes is maintained by a crew of 12, many of whom were here during the construction. Even though it was put in as a

state-of-the-art layout, constant changes still occur. Twenty-two bunkers, the enlargement of two greens, the redesign of a fairway, and many hundreds of trees have been added in the last two years. Keith Kaminsky, an affiliate member, was brought in on several of these

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### **Have You Made Your Reservation?**

1993 Golf Course Superintendents' **INSTITUTE**  
November 3, 4 and 5

## DOWN THE DRAIN

*by Randy Gai*

Our September GCSANC meeting, held in Windsor, literally "dropped jaws" and "opened eyes." The meeting featured an open forum discussion on waste and environmental liabilities conducted by Jerry Brown, VP of Finney & Brown Insurance Brokers; Mike Maddock, California Steam, Inc.; and Carey Krefft, NSTC Farmtec. We were clearly shown how our industry is wide open to face severe penalties imposed by the state or local water quality control board, the federal E.P.A., the county Hazardous Materials Division, or the Department of Fish and Game, simply because of the way we wash our maintenance equipment. The water running down our drains when we use high pressure washers, degreasers and the like can contain fertilizer residue, pesticide residues, oil, grease, hydraulic fluid and fuel residues, soaps, detergents, and solvents, as well as trace metals. Lead residues can be released by the washing of electric golf carts. The problem is not in the washing of the equipment, but where the water goes.

It is a direct violation of the law if you have waste water going onto gravel, into the ground or a storm drain, or into a nearby creek or stream or have knowledge of this activity taking place and do

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## OWN THE DRAIN

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not intervene to stop the pollution. The liability does not stop at the superintendent, but carries on to the club managers, directors, owners, and course operators if they knowingly allow this pollution to continue.

The solution is to determine what types of compounds are being washed off, then implement the proper removal technique, and, finally, divert the water to a sanitary sewer line. Constructing a wash pad (wash rack) is a viable solution as long as it is engineered properly. The only negative drawback will be the ongoing need to retrofit as environmental laws change in the future and become more demanding.

The bottom line is, we must get our "heads out of the sand NOW," and spend the dollars on remediation

before we are caught, fined, and forced to do the construction anyway -- or worse.

## Institute Update

The brochure and registration form for the 4th Annual Golf Course Superintendent's Institute have been mailed.

If you have not received your application, please call Barbara at the office. Reservations must be made by October 29th.

The Pesticide Laws and Regulations seminar on November 3, will run from 1:00-5:00pm and will be followed by the tradeshow. Thursday offers a full day, with registration and trade show beginning at 6:30am, seminar series from 8:00am to 5:00pm, and dinner at 6:30pm.

## Bubble Gum Sends Geese Packing

There's no accounting for taste: You may love the flavor of grape bubble gum or soda; some birds can't stand it. This fact may come to the rescue of landscapers, golf course managers, and anyone in charge of grassy expanses overrun by an exploding population of Canada geese. Graceful in flight, the goose is a loud, aggressive, voracious eater that can leave about a quarter of a pound of droppings a day.

The bubble gum flavor comes from methyl anthranilate (MA), a chemical that occurs naturally in Concord grapes and citrus blossoms. In synthesized form MA serves as a tasty food additive. Now it's proving to be a goose repellent.

Given a choice between untreated corn and kernels with MA, caged geese in experiments overwhelmingly rejected MA-laced kernels, says John Cummings, a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Denver Wildlife Research Center.

Cummings is helping to develop an MA-flavored microcapsule that can be sprayed on grass and remain viable for 40 days, compared with today's limit of 15. Long-lasting MA is needed to ward off both resident birds and migratory geese that join them spring and fall.

## Tips from the USGA Magic Beans

*by Paul Vermeulen,  
USGA Agronomist*

Stranger things have happened than the story I am about to tell. Two months ago I was in Phoenix visiting with a friend when I took a my first sip of 100% Colombian coffee, Yuban to be exact. If you drink as much coffee as I do to get through the first few hours of each day then you probably, like myself, are a connoisseur of fine coffee beans from around the world. If that is the case, the flavor of Yuban is just simply hard to beat.

Now having adopted Yuban as my coffee of choice, I noticed a small patch of hybrid bermudagrass just off the edge of my patio. Not that hybrid bermudagrass isn't wonderful to begin with, but this patch was especially dark green. (No, I do not own a female dog!) After some serious investigation I discovered, much to my surprise, that the dark green patch just so happened to be the direct result of a coffee spill. And not just any coffee spill mind you, but Yuban, 100% Colombian coffee percolated with Costa Mesa municipal water.

As it turns out, it seems that coffee beans grown in certain regions of Colombia contain a unique enzyme that breaks down the organic molecules of

ordinary thatch and, as a consequence, nitrogen is released into the soil. Many of you readers are probably already aware that the breakdown of certain humic acids is currently of intense interest to the scientific community, as it may be the key to lessening our dependence on fungicide applications.

Do you feel something starting to pull on your leg? You should, but if not, pick up the phone and call: 1-MAG-ICB-EANS. My partner is standing by for your order of PAUL'S MAGIC COLOMBIAN BEANS for just \$19.95. And remember our slogan: "If you can't sleep because you're losing your greens, then just be happy and spray, spray, spray with Paul's Magic Colombian Beans."

What's the point? The point is that it has been a long summer and I have watched several people take a "leap of faith." Like spraying magic potions that are supposed to cure greens of whatever ails them, as opposed to employing sound agronomic practices. Unfortunately, even though spraying magic potions may not cause any direct harm to the turf, such acts can erode our (mine included!) collective professionalism! As an example, can you even begin to imagine what

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