

## That silver lining

Optimism seems to be going the way of carrier pigeons and buggy whips.

For the past few years, the economy has had most industries in an ever-tightening half nelson; the future cast in different shades of gloom and doom.

In March, we began research on a story on water use, conservation, quality and quantity in the Green Industry. You will find the first part of it in this issue.

"Oh, no. More bad news," some of you may be thinking. On the contrary. Optimism has again found a niche.

In fact, after three months of traveling, doing over 50 interviews from California to Florida and more than 10,000 air miles, we found the most prevalent aspect was not that we are going to dry up and blow away, but that farsightedness may be the life preserver of an industry that could have been awash in apathy.

Right now, there is no immediate water shortage in this country. It's what could happen down the road, though, that golf course superintendents, landscape and golf course architects, other landscaping professionals and industry associations are trying to nip in the bud now before an industry-wide disaster hits.

The USGA Green Section is at the forefront contributing \$5 million in funds in the next 10 to 15 years for research on various levels dealing with water problems. Industry professionals on an individual basis, are making contributions, that, when added together, can produce a groundswell of progress.

The awareness of the problem is there and it is building momentum.

For once an industry is *acting* instead of *reacting* to a potentially serious problem.

One final note. I had the privilege of interviewing Dr. Victor Youngner of the University of California, Riverside, for this story. On April 18, a day before his 62nd birthday, he died. His comments and observations from our interview have remained in the story. We feel Dr. Youngner's valuable contributions over the years to the turfgrass industry, and specifically his research in low-water-use turfgrasses, are the best tribute to a scientist who gave so much to his profession.



*Maureen Hrehocik*

Maureen Hrehocik, managing editor

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