

The GREEN Breeze



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Mark Your Calendar

Green Crest Golf Club	Golf	May 6
Miami Valley GCSA Windy Knoll Golf Club	Field Day	May 21
Western Hill Country Club	Scholarship & Research Tournament	June 2
Miami View Country Club	Superintendentship' Championship	August 4

Announcements

Upcoming Event



From the President

Well it looks like spring is finally here with temperatures this week being somewhat normal and no snow in the forecast. You would think that after twenty-something years: I would be better prepared for the rush of things to do but that does not seem to be the case.

Each year brings its own set of challenges and circumstances, but the one thing that seems to remain the same is there is more to do than time and manpower to do them.

I am racing against the clock to get the last of my preemergent out in time to beat Mr. Crabgrass and the wind has me on this computer instead of my sprayer. We are pressurizing the irrigation system today and keeping my fingers crossed that no major problems arise. Some areas of the course are too wet to mow, and at the same time we may have to water a couple of spots on a few greens if we do not get any rainfall this week. A couple of bunkers still need edging, there are some trees to remove (thanks to the Emerald Ash Borer!) and the list just seems to keep getting bigger.

I hope all of you have had a chance to go to the website and check out our calendar for 2014. I guess as a board we gauge our success on your participation in the events we plan. In my years on the board some events have been very successful and some not so much. I know we all have many demands on our time, and we try to keep this in mind when putting together our meetings.

Personally, the older I get the less free time I seem to have. I know I am not alone as many of my friends tell me they are experiencing the same thing. I guess it is the culture we live in, or maybe it has always been this way? Either way I hope all of you will plan to attend as many meetings as possible and show your support for our chapter. As always, if you have any ideas or concerns for our meetings please get in touch with a board member and let them know your thoughts.

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2013 -2014 President
Ron Frecking

Greater Cincinnati GCSA Happenings

Meeting Information

- As a thank you to all of our Affiliate Commercial Members each Affiliate member will be able to bring one Class A, SM, or C member for without charge
- Registration 10:30 AM
- 11:00 Lunch & Meeting
- Speakers: John Fanning and Mike O'Connell
- Topic "Superintendent/Salesman Relations"
- Noon Shotgun
- Cost:\$30.00 Includes Affiliate Commercial Member and one guest.

Application for Scholarships
Due May 1, 2014
Applications Online www.gcgcsa.org



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Employment Pointers

By Tim Eavenson

Timothy R. Eavenson, Esq. of Eavenson Employment Law made his presentation "Employment Points for Golf Course Supervisors." Tim discussed tactics and techniques for contracts and negotiations in the realm of his specialty, employment.

He stated, "When entering into any negotiation prepare a priority list. One should have at least your top three challenges clear in your mind." The most common negotiation talking points are:

- Salary or Money
- Benefits
- Vacation/time off

Tim explained your contract governs everything. It is best to "think long term and let them know you are." In an employment contract, the employer agrees to provide the employee with a specific set of benefits, such as salary, health insurance, a retirement plan, and any other benefit that both parties have agreed is necessary. At the same time, the contract will contain clauses that determine the range of services that the employee will provide in exchange for these benefits. The idea is to include as much detail as possible, so that there is very little room for misinterpretation of what is expected of each party.

Tim pointed out some commonly overlooked negotiation points are: defined job responsibilities, who evaluates you and how

it's done, the use of outside consultation and reassignment protection.

Essentials of Contracts

- Duration and extension of employment is of primary concern
- Compensation—think total package, bonus structure should be measurable
- Duties and expectations—this should be accomplished with a written job description (very important)
- Results of termination

Industry issues such as disability and termination with no severance is worth negotiating when starting a new position. An employment contract is a legally binding agreement between an employer and employee that sets forth the terms of the employment relationship. Employment contracts will generally be enforced as long as the terms are not egregious and the employee is not required to contract away his rights under worker-protection legislation. Such contracts generally dictate certain aspects of the behavior of both employees and employers.

Once you are "on the job" it is important to know:

- Know your documents (how to file complaints, etc.)

- Employment contract (where is it, who keeps copies, etc.)
- Job description (always important to know what you are hired to do)
- Benefit plan documents (what else do you get?)
- HR policies (policies can be considered agreements and both parties need to uphold)

Common pitfalls for executives and those in management positions include: hiring, employee discipline jokes, bullying, and harassment. Termination disputes are also hot buttons.

In the United States, including Illinois and Ohio, most employment is at-will. This means that an employer can fire any employee he wants for any reason, except those reasons prohibited by anti-discrimination legislation, (Discrimination must be related to your status as a protected class. Examples include: age, sex/sexual orientation, religion, national origin, status as veteran or disability.) such as Title VII or the Americans with Disabilities Act. An employee can also quit at any time, for any reason. Therefore, no employment contract is required in the us.

Credit: *On Course*. Publication of the Midwest GCSA. March 14

GCSAA Great Lakes Regional Roundup

By John Miller

I hope this communication finds everyone enjoying warmer temperatures, the turf is now growing well, and winter is behind us. Just in case you are still dealing with turf damaged by winter weather, GCSAA has put together a Winter Resource Center to help our members with information and communication to their golfers and management. In this center you will find links to webcasts, magazine, and news articles that will help you provide information to those who need it. There are also links to information provided by other superintendents as to how they were able to battle through the harsh conditions.

The EIFG (Environmental Institute for Golf) is making great strides in reaching its member donation mark of 51% of members donating to the institute. During our campaign last fall, we increased our donor number by over 7%, and we continue to see more and more superintendents donate to the eifg. If you have donated, thank you very much, if you have not and would like to donate, you can do so through the website at www.gcsaa.org or directly through the EIFG website at www.eifg.org.

Rounds for Research continues to show great increases. We are still collecting rounds for the two auctions this year, the first one being during the US Open time in June and the second one during PGA Championship time in August.

If you would care to participate, you can donate to Rounds for Research and get national exposure for your golf course; and 80% of the money raised goes to the chapter and can be used for research, government advocacy, education, and scholarships. It is a great way to give the chapter extra money while helping out fellow superintendents.

On the government advocacy front, there are many items bouncing in the air right now. Pollinator's legislation, methyl bromide legislation, and even npdes Permitting is still on the table. That is just a list of national issues not to mention statewide issues that are popping up in many states around the country.

In Chicago, we had legislation put forward that would have eliminated home rule and allowed each city (based on population) make their own rules regarding pesticides. Due to some great work by golf course

superintendents and the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents that legislation was dropped and did not make it to a vote.

This shows how important it is for each member to be aware of what is going on in local politics and if something concerns you, let your chapter know or let gcsaa know so that we can investigate and if necessary take action. Chava McKeel and her team are great to work with and very quick to respond to

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Our Host Facility for May: Green Crest Golf Club

Our host at Green Crest Golf Club is Mitch Harter, and yes, that is his son working in the pro shop, Jason.

Late in the fall of 1969, we began the construction of Green Crest Golf Course. In 1972, we opened a very basic 18 hole golf course. But the process of improvement continued for the next 42 years since that opening day in 1972.

These are some of the in-house projects that were undertaken by the grounds crew and management team:

- Planting hundreds of trees
- Constructing sand traps
- Re-shaping all of the original tees, plus building forward and back tees
- Building a new putting green with

landscaping

- Routing the continuous cart paths

Most recent improvements include re-shaping the lake on holes 4, 5 and 6, plus the incorporation of mounding and the tee boxes on holes 5, 6 and 8.

Work and Life Balance of a Golf Course Superintendent

By Doug Roe

We all have been there, that fun question every superintendent or assistant loves to answer: "So, what do you do for a living?" I, myself, was on a playground a couple of weekends ago when my son starting playing with another boy, and, of course, I got into a conversation with the other father, and the question popped up.

As usual, I got the typical response, "Wow, that's cool, you must play a lot of golf!" Another good one we all get: "That's my dream job!" but we all know the time and dedication that we put into our profession and the costs that come with it.

I have been in the industry for twenty-three years and have learned many things over the past few years, from superintendents to salespeople, about keeping a good work/life

I will never forget, while a student at Penn State University, listening to Dick Bator speak at a turfgrass club meeting. He said that half of us would be divorced at some point in our career due to the amount of time we will spend at our job.

balance. Many of us pour our hearts and guts into our profession and sometimes forget

about the people who mean the most.

I will never forget, while a student at Penn State University, listening to Dick Bator speak at a turfgrass club meeting. He said that half of us would be divorced at some point in our career due to the amount of time we will spend at our job. He said to be prepared to live, eat, and sleep at this profession. I never really thought much of it, maybe he was just some crazy guy trying to scare me, but, for me, some of his words ended up true.

We all have put in our time as an assistant and worked damn hard to get where we are

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today. I have spent many grueling hours at my job — missing family events, weddings, and birthdays — because the course yelled louder than my family. Recently, I have gone through a divorce, and have had my ups and downs in this profession. But I have learned a lot and I am not going to let that stop me from loving what I enjoy doing.

I love to work hard, get dirty, see the end result, and get back up in the morning and do it all over again. We are probably the most dedicated professionals around, and we wouldn't be here if we didn't love what we do. I have a son, age 7 and a half. I cherish the time I have with him, and, as a result, I have had to manage my time much more effectively. Here are some things I have learned and want to share with you:

Critique Yourself

Now, we all work at least a 40-hour work week, more like 60+ in season, so you owe it to yourself to review the issue. Try to get to the bottom of where the majority of your time is being spent during your work day to allow for increased time management and productivity. Sometimes it feels like we are firefighting all day, so find where you might

be wasting time and do some restructuring.

Knock Out Those Big Tasks First

We all have some big tasks to deal with on a daily basis. Whenever possible, try rearranging your schedule each day by tackling the big projects first. You are typically at your peak performance earlier in the day. Move the less important tasks until after lunch.

Create A Schedule

This is critical to time management and we all do it in some form. I am big on using white boards while others still use just a piece of paper. Either way, don't just make a to-do list, also establish a schedule for your workday. Maybe the task at hand will require more manpower? Try to allot an estimated time for each project or task.

Avoid Interruptions

Try your best to create a distraction-free workspace. Avoid having the "pop-in." Make sure that visitors, such as vendors, as well as staff schedule their meetings with you in advance. Try to use your handy smartphone to manage that busy schedule. Let salespeople know that they must call or text ahead of

time.

Learn How To Say "No"

You have a busy day ahead of you, you are on task, and the next thing you know the GM calls with a request for green divot repair supplies for the bag drop staff. The Pro Shop staff knows exactly where to get it, so just say "no," and tell them to get it themselves. Try to plan ahead for situations like these and teach others how to handle it on their own.

Perspective

Don't fret over the small tasks and end up turning your to-do list in to far more than it really is, just focus on meeting the deadlines. If you get anxious about the next day or week, lay out your schedule to take a better look at what needs to be accomplished so you can establish a timeframe. This is when I sit with my assistant and get a second opinion and narrow down what is important. A second point of view always helps.

Know When You're Done

Try to stop spending your evenings in the office reworking things until they are perfect.
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Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Notes

By Brian Laurent, Executive Director, Ohio Turfgrass Foundation

Teaching Your Staff To Play The Kazoo

A bit of an odd title, I will admit. But an exercise conducted by speaker, Mike McKinley at a recent conference really drove home the importance of quality leadership in creating an exceptional product.

Think of this scenario...you give each of your staff members a kazoo and tell them to go ahead and play a tune. Chances are, you'll get some that have no clue which end to blow into, others thinking the thing is broken and the ones that know how to work it are creating some ridiculous, monotone sound.

Now, take a second to ask your team if they know which end to blow into (it's the big end). Make sure to tell them that just blowing into it won't make a sound, you need to vocalize a bit to create a vibration. Now that the basics are covered, give your team some additional direction by asking them to play a song that everyone knows (try Row, Row, Row Your Boat!) and get them started in unison.

Bingo! What you have now is a bit of harmony.

Many of us often get so busy that we forget to provide the essentials to accomplish the job. While you may know every tool inside and out, chances are that your staff isn't as familiar with them. Make sure that they know what they're using and make them aware of any intricacies associated with the tool.

Finally, and just as important as all other steps, make sure you and your team are all playing the same tune! Be certain that every member of your team understands your goals and expectations. It only takes one person playing to a different beat to throw off your harmony.

Our goals at OTF are to provide you with exceptional value as an OTF member and to continue advancing the turfgrass industry through our support of research, education and scholarships. While the concert venue may change from time to time, the tune has remained the same for more than 50 years...I hope that you'll pick up that kazoo and play along.

Credit: *Turf News*. May/June 2014



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Turf Will Need Time To Heal This Season

By Keith Happ, Director, North-Central Region

Reestablishing plant health above and below ground will be challenging this spring. Recovery can occur and turf performance can be sustained if adequate time is provided to new grass plants.

During the winter months a great deal of planning and preparation takes place. The agronomic planning sessions center on growing healthy grass that can present sustainable, consistent playing conditions during the summer months.

For many, particularly those in the Northern tier of the North-Central Region, winter damage has severely impacted putting green turf's emergence from dormancy this spring. We are now starting to get a feel for the extent of the damage experienced. Wind desiccation damage, crown hydration and anoxia have occurred. The emergence of new bud leaves is a sign that the grass will recover as long as adequate time is provided to reestablish surface density and root mass in the soil profile.

Golf is played on the surface of a dense stand of grass; however, it is the root mass in the soil that provides the foundation that allows grass to tolerate traffic and environmental

stress during the summer months.

Not that we don't have enough to worry about, but during recent Course Consulting Service visits adult annual bluegrass weevil movement has been observed. This early movement is a sign that their migration back from over wintering sites has begun. This is not a time to panic; rather it is a time so that insecticide applications can be timed to provide maximum control. Weevil migration will be hampered by cold weather that is currently being predicted by extended 10 day forecasts. Scout for population movement in order to treat at the best possible time to interrupt the egg laying cycles.

Reestablishing plant health above and below ground will be challenging this spring. Recovery can occur and turf performance can be sustained if adequate time is provided to new grass plants.

It will be important to exercise patience this spring while recovery from winter injury occurs and pest control measures are imple-

mented.

April 16, 2014

Golf Course in Chile.
Buckeye Turf Archives



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Patience Rewards a Life of Service

By Trent Bouts, Editor of *Through the Green*

Ronald McWhorter had been through some "closed door moments" in his time as an assistant golf course superintendent. The kind of moments when the click behind you signals a bullet is on its way. You know the boss is taking aim. The only question worth asking is whether you survive the hit.

Until this particular day last November, McWhorter, 46, had survived the worst of these encounters with little more than bruised pride and his ears ringing. He was too good at what he did, too dedicated, too conscientious, to slip up so badly he should be fired. Sadly though, that standard is not always insurance enough these days. He knows good people can lose jobs to bad times.

McWhorter had 27 years in the business and every single one of them on The Landing course at Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro. He'd helped build the course, starting as a laborer barely out of high school then slowly but steadily working his way through the ranks. No one on the planet knew that acreage better than him. He'd been an assistant since '91, the first assistant since '98.

Still...

So when his golf course superintendent, Lane Singleton, closed the door that day, McWhorter swallowed hard. He remembers

He was too good at what he did, too dedicated, too conscientious, to slip up so badly he should be fired. Sadly though, that standard is not always insurance enough these days. He knows good people can lose jobs to bad times.

thinking, "Oh, oh. I didn't know what to expect."

He'd been on the golf course when his phone buzzed. Singleton's text was short, maybe sharp? He wanted to see McWhorter in his office. McWhorter texted back explaining that he needed about half an hour to wrap up what he was working on and asked if that was ok. Singleton didn't reply.

They were 30 unsettling minutes and after a couple more, once he'd arrived and Singleton had started talking, McWhorter was on the verge of tears. He hadn't been fired. He'd

been promoted —to golf course superintendent. He was overwhelmed.

"I felt like a little kid," he says. "I almost started crying. It was definitely a shock. We'd had some closed door moments before. Sometimes good. But sometimes for, let's say, corrective measures. But this really caught me by surprise. I was in awe. I didn't know what to think."

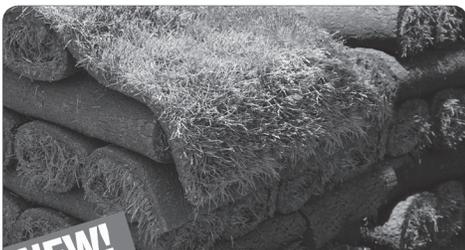
After 27 years, who would?

It's a unique situation," says Pat Jones, who is among the best qualified to make that statement. He has traveled the nation for decades, promoting and writing about the golf course maintenance industry, first with GCSAA, Golfdom, his own company Flagstick and now as editorial director and publisher of Golf Course Industry magazine. "In all my years, I've never heard of anyone waiting that long, staying that patient and committed." Consider that Reagan was president when McWhorter began in 1986. Rafael Nadal was born that year.

Typically, only monks invest that kind of time in one place without complaining.

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Patience Rewards, continued from page 5

The parallel is not that crazy, because McWhorter has always seen his work, his purpose, as service. It helps explain his patience, which should not be taken for a lack of ambition. "I wasn't pushing hard to get that title," he says. "That's not because I was complacent. I just wasn't going to go knocking doors down to get it. I felt time would bring about the change. My purpose is just to be a servant, to serve my company and my co-workers."

He lives by the same philosophy outside of work. Heavily involved in his church, McWhorter also occupies a seat on the Greensboro city council, winning election in 2002. He is chairman of the Greene County Recreation Department and the Oconee Area Development Authority. He was invited to run for council. He was appointed golf course superintendent. When your ambition is service opportunities present themselves, eventually.

McWhorter's workmates wanted to take him and celebrate his promotion and that of Brandon Haves, who was elevated to superintendent of the Great Waters course the same day. Singleton's responsibilities had increased steadily in recent years and with the new title of vice-president of agronomy

there was room for both McWhorter and Haves to step up a notch.

A celebration seemed reasonable but McWhorter said. "No, thanks, I'm good." Instead, he texted his brother and his sister then later told his mother. "She was like a kid in a candy store. all excited," he says. "Then she says..., 'So what does that mean?' My dad didn't know what it would mean for me either.—Golf had never been part of the family experience. McWhorter only took up

"I wasn't pushing hard to get that title," he says. "That's not because I was complacent. I just wasn't going to go knocking doors down to get it. I felt time would bring about the change. My purpose is just to be a servant, to serve my company and my co-workers."

the game itself in 1991. Today his handicap hovers around 10.

Perhaps there was a need for McWhorter himself to have some time to process the news. While he'd been in golf nearly three decades, it had only been a few years since he first truly entertained the prospect of being the main man. The spark came dur-

ing a career development meeting led by Billy Fuller, the former leading golf course superintendent who runs golf course design company.

"That was the first time I had any inkling," McWhorter says. "I was content but still hungry to learn. With every promotion comes more expectation. It has led me to look now with more of a magnifying glass. Before it was okay to say, let me get back to you. Well, the buck stops here now so I have to have all the information at hand at that moment. You're like a doctor on call all the time."

In 2008, McWhorter completed a Principals of Turfgrass Management course at the University of Georgia. He is a regular at Georgia GCSA seminars but the overwhelming weight of his education has come on the job. "I've had great teachers," he says, rattling off the names of superintendents he has worked under: Butch Foust, Steve Brady, Dennis Echols, CGCs and of course Singleton, who was a co-assistant alongside McWhorter when he arrived at Reynolds Plantation 14 years ago.

"Obviously it was long overdue," Singleton says of McWhorter's promotion. "It was a

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Patience Rewards, continued from page 6

great time for our crew, for Reynolds Plantation and the community. Whether it's with his church, or the number of committees he's on, Ron is a very, very busy guy. I can't say enough about him. He hardly ever takes a day off. I don't know when he sleeps."

"Some of the guys say I'm out of my mind," McWhorter laughs. "But I get in here sometimes at 4.30am just to have my quiet time and get ready for the day." Getting ready includes planning tasks for the day but often includes "a few chapters of the Bible" or whatever else he is reading at the time, most recently, Rick Warren's "A Purpose Driven Life."

Echols speaks of McWhorter with similar regard as Singleton. "I have had the pleasure of working with many good assistant golf course superintendents throughout my

career," he says. "I have been honored to work with a few great assistants too. Ronald is definitely one of the great ones. He is a true gentleman who exemplifies honesty, truthfulness and integrity. There is no doubt with his solid foundation of golf course management, and personal commitment of being a Godly example, he will continue his career, making positive impacts on others and the golf industry."

McWhorter certainly regards himself as part of the industry, not merely a passenger. He hopes to serve on the Georgia GCSA board or directors at some point and he is mindful that he is breaking ground. As Pat Jones—who coincidentally started in golf in the same year as McWhorter—observes, "I can truly count on one hand the number of African-American golf course superinten-

dents that I have known in that time."

"No, you don't see many African-Americans in turfgrass management," McWhorter says. "But I am seeing more and more black people playing the game. I definitely hope that me being a golf course superintendent helps open some eyes for young African-Americans. But it's not just for guys. We have career days where the company sends us to speak at schools and I tell them this can be for ladies too."

The door is open, he says, for anyone willing to step through. Hopefully they won't have to wait 27 years to hear that one click that counts.

Credit: *Through The Green*. Publication of the Georgia GCS. March/April 2014

Work and Life Balance, continued from page 4

Ask yourself, "What is the end goal and have I reached it?" Try your best not to bring work home; use your time efficiently with your family. In most cases, it can wait until tomor-

row. And, if you can convince your club that brown is the new green, you will sleep great every night... I haven't figured that out yet but hopefully will have that answer soon!

Credit: *The Bonnie Greensward*. Publication of the Philadelphia Association of GCSA.

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Presidents Note, *continued from page 1*

We will be at Green Crest Golf Club on May 6th and affiliate commercial members are invited to bring a guest superintendent free of charge (class A, SM or C). We will have some type of skin game that day, and I am hoping for a good turnout. The speakers are

John Fanning and Mike O'Connell, I am sure their presentation will be lively and entertaining.

One last note, scholarship applications are due May 1st which is rapidly approaching.

I would encourage all of you with a son or daughter already in college or starting in the fall to have them to apply. All of the information and application forms can be found on our website, good luck!

GCSAA Great Lakes Regional Roundup *continued from page 10*

member needs. GCSAA is also implementing a Government Ambassador Program that will put a GCSAA Member with each Representative and Senator in Congress. More information is being assembled as of this writing, please watch the website for more details and if you are willing to be an ambassador, please let either Chava McKeel or myself know. We

would love to have you participate.

With the rough winter behind us and as we move in to better weather, if there are things GCSAA can help you with from your membership benefits to helping you with information about certain topics, please don't hesitate to contact me or call GCSAA headquarters at 800-

472-7878. We are here to serve you and are always happy to help our members!

Pictures from Four Bridges: Sean Walters and Steve Haushalter



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