return, it helps your professional image when asking to purchase a $40,000 piece of equipment. And members are getting that professional appearance that they pay for and deserve on an upscale golf course.

We have recently started cleaning the shop on Monday mornings. It sets a positive atmosphere for the week. Each day all trash is emptied throughout the buildings, shop and fuel island. Every Friday we scrub the floors in the lunchroom, hallways and the shop floor.

Most people reading this article may think, “Man, I don’t have that much time” or, “My job is to keep the golf courses clean.” From experience, it takes less time to clean each day and week, rather than a massive spring-cleaning or rainy-day cleanup. Like the outside of the building, we made the inside as maintenance-free as possible. Ceramic tile was installed instead of linoleum. This saves money and time each year from waxing the linoleum.

For these reasons and many more, it is important to keep the “hub” well-designed, spotless and extremely organized. It is everyone’s responsibility to keep the building in good condition. It portrays a professional image for everyone.

MATTHEW R. TAYLOR
Bonita Bay East

Superintendents with Blue Collars Aren’t Invisible

I am a working superintendent at a daily fee course. Part of my day is spent preparing the course for play, mowing or applying chemicals.

A normal work day at Winter Pines Golf Club is 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with a break at 8:30 a.m. and a half hour for lunch. I usually work three hours on Sunday morning unless a seminar, meeting or golf tournament has been planned in advance.

Since I am a supervisor and also part of the working staff, I have a uniform to wear like the rest of the crew while on the clock. Wearing a golf shirt and slacks isn’t very practical since I may have to perform any of the jobs on the course. The company provides and pays for the cleaning of everyone’s uniform.

Winter Pines is a family-owned and -operated club. Projects, problems and even normal maintenance are normal daily topics of conversation with the owner, Ed McMillin and his son, Jon, who is the president and club manager. They are very hands-on people and are often out in the field working side by side with us on capital projects. So my image and visibility with them are born out of mutual respect for our abilities and commitment to the common success of the course.

Communicating and being visible to members and guests is just as important at a public course as they are at a private club. I usually stop by the clubhouse for either breaks or lunch...
daily and I am available to answer ques-
tions from our regular members and
daily-fee players. We also keep a club-
house bulletin board with basic infor-
mation on repairing ball marks and
divots and course etiquette posted to
educate our guests. I also promptly
return phone calls from homeowners
who live around the course.

I touch base frequently with the head
pro John Pohira or his assistants Mike
Hess and Becky Kaye. They keep me
informed of the good and bad com-
ments from the customers and tell me
about any special events that are being
planned. Our maintenance schedule is
pretty flexible, so any cultural prac-
tices only need a minimum of a week’s
notice to plan tee times for closing
nine holes for a half day.

Our maintenance shop is located
behind the ninth green and near the
first tee. It is also visible from the club-
house and parking lot so keeping the
shop and the surrounding area clean
and neat is a top priority. Fertilizer and
chemical rooms are kept cleaned and
locked. All equipment is cleaned daily
as it returns to the shop.

The employee bulletin board at the
shop has all the required federal, state
and local notices posted including wage
and hour, worker’s compensation,
OSHA and Hazardous Materials/MSDS
information. The FCCI person does a
safety inspection of our shop every two
or three months and the Florida Depart-
ment of Agriculture inspector checks our
pesticide records and does fertilizer and
seed analysis when requested.

The planned work schedule for the
crew is posted daily by the time clock.
I talk with my mechanic, spray tech,
landscape specialist and other key per-
sons daily to give them a chance to ask
any questions or report their observa-
tions on any course problems.

I maintain a very active role with
my professional associations. I usually
attend local monthly chapter meetings,
state association meetings, educational
seminars and the annual GCSAA Con-
ference and Show. My spray techni-
cian and other key crew members usu-
ally attend the Mid-Florida Turf Con-
ference. All education is usually paid
for or reimbursed by the owner and we
are encouraged to attend as our sched-
ule permits.

I think I have been very visible in
the industry by playing other golf
courses, attending meetings and semi-
nars, and serving in local and state
associations. No matter what the ac-
tivity, I always learn new ideas and
information. Every operation needs a
little tweaking now and then so I’m
always listening and learning to do my
job better.

A positive image is something every
type of superintendent can achieve at
their individual courses no matter how
big or small the budgets are.

JOE ONDO, CGCS
Winter Pines GC

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