

I get tired of hearing the argument that some clubs can't afford for their superintendents to join associations or participate in conferences, trade shows and attend meetings. How does \$187.50 a month sound? Anybody can find ways to work the budget to find \$187.50 a month. Here's why they should:

Where else can a golf club get (1) subscriptions to three turf management magazines, two newsletters, monthly bulletins

for owners (even if associations have been providing them for free as a service to the industry); (2) access to endless resource materials for labor issues, training, communications, media relations and any other topic you need help with; (3) consulting services on personnel issues like hiring, harassment, payroll/labor laws, family leave, overtime and terminations; (4) political representation in

Tallahassee and Washington on issues like water use permits, pesticide surveillance programs, OSHA, ADA, FQPA, Clean Waters Act, Clean Air Act, Immigrant Labor and a host of others; (5) access to monthly meetings, education speakers and peer networking; (6) access to state and national conferences and trade show where all the suppliers, educators, researchers and allied industry experts gather to share knowledge of products, services and good old one on one problem solving; (7) support for turf research which solves your turf management problems which make your members happy and your job easier?

Let's put a price tag on it! You get all this and more for about \$510 a year. That's \$42.50 a month. Any club can afford that. OK! That's just your up-front cost to belong to the three most significant associations in your professional life: the FGCSA (\$100 average)/GCSAA (\$250) and the FTGA (\$160). I put a slash between the FGCSA and GCSAA because its a dual membership deal. If you join one you have to join

the other. You don't like that? See that list up above? All those services which help and protect you and your club's interests take funding.

Here's the rest of the deal. Don't just be a checkbook member. Go to meetings and participate. If you attend monthly meetings of your local chapter, figure an average of \$40 for meeting, lunch and golf. Skip golf if you have to and save some money, but go get the education and talk to your peers about problems. Isn't it worth \$25 to talk to the best consultants around? Say you make six meetings a year and play golf each time. That's \$240 per year. Still not sure? Go at least once a quarter. That's \$160 per year.

Next item is conferences and trade shows. You can argue till the cows come home about the value of going to the GCSAA and/or the FTGA events each year. If your time and budget permits, then go to both. There will be a wealth of *new* information at each event. If you go to the GCSAA show and plan wisely, you can figure about \$1,000 to \$1,500 for a four- to five-day stay. That would include taking several college-level seminars, the no-fee general sessions and the trade show. You can make it a weekend or a week. It's your call.

If you can't get away to the national event, then by all means don't miss the FTGA conference and show. Registration, education, trade show and a one- or two-night stay might run \$500.

OK! Let's total up the damage: \$510 in dues, \$240 for meetings, (let's go big) \$1,500 for conference and show. The grand total is \$2,250 or \$187.50 per month on a budget line item. There isn't a club in the world that can't afford \$187.50 a month to have all the local, state and national turf management resources at your fingertips.

That doesn't count the intangible effects of a club showing support for its superintendent. There's always something new to be learned that results in better playing conditions and/or lowered costs. Both scenarios help offset the \$2,250 spent for dues, education and travel.

Show me a better bargain if you can. For \$187.50 a month you get all the services, resources and information you need to keep your golf course superintendent and your golf course on track for success. You can't afford not to do it!

The Best Bargain in Town

Green Side Up



Joel Jackson, CGCS
Editor