keeping crew happy keeps crew, period.

By terry buchen

talking with super, i take the opportunity to inquire about unusual fringe benefits that courses give their maintenance staff, other than vacations, sick days, holidays, etc., to improve employee morale. a little bit of thoughtfulness goes a long way.

some examples include:
- employee golf tournaments, with an award party afterward. two-person teams are popular, with a scramble or alternate shot format. taking the winning team’s picture, blowing it up, framing it, and placing it for permanent display on the crew’s lunchroom wall is a real morale booster.
- employee fishing tournaments, where each employee catches as many fish as possible in a two-hour timeframe, with an award party afterward. the winner’s picture on the lunchroom wall also works well.
- give each employee two movie ticket certificates for use on any day of their choice.
- have an employee luncheon in the clubhouse, in addition to the usual employee Christmas party.
- give out gift certificates to a favorite local restaurant chain for the employee and spouse, and maybe enough for the kids.
- put on a soda machine party, where all profits from the lunchroom vending machine go back to the employees in a regular scheduled event, perhaps monthly.
- club sponsorship of softball, bowling, volleyball and touch football teams is quite popular, with the course supplying the uniforms and paying part or all of the team entry fees.
- annual family picnics, usually held off course property, are in vogue.
- performance bonuses are starting to pop up at a few clubs to reward employees after the season is over, after a member/guest tournament, etc.
- give employees their birthday off with pay.

most of the supers surveyed said they noticed quite an attitude adjustment and it really paid off in improved productivity and employee overall happiness.

four supers enter maine golf hall of fame

poland spring, maine — four superintendents were among 17 people inducted into the newly formed maine golf hall of fame, during ceremonies held at the country’s oldest resort golf course, Poland Spring Country Club.

charles "pappy" erswell of brunswick, shirley liscumb of bar harbor, frank a. gilman of augusta and james c. jones of cape elizabeth, all deceased, were honored. alex t. chisholm of belfast, known as a course designer, club maker, player and teacher, was among the others inducted.

regarded as the father of maine golf, erswell was especially famous for his inventions, including the first-known golf cart in about 1917. he was instrumental in forming the maine golf association that in 1917 became the maine seniors’ golf association, which he served as president.

a stone marker at the 3rd tee at historic kebo valley club in bar harbor commemorates liscumb’s service as pro-course superintendent. he totaled 50 years at kebo, the birthplace of maine golf in 1891.

gilman did everything in golf at augusta (maine) country club for about 30 years. a greenkeeper and instructor, he won four maine open titles.

breaking into golf as a caddie in 1917, jones gave lessons at augusta cc while a junior in high school. he was head pro at bath country club for 16 years and was the first president of the maine gcsa. he was active as a course designer and superintendent consultant almost until his death in 1991.

del. deciding outdoor plan

four more workshops have been scheduled for public input into Delaware’s statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (scorp). the state’s division of parks and recreation, which updates scorp every five years, has set the agenda for the meetings.

the upcoming meetings will be:
- tuesday, oct. 26, at 7 p.m. in the milford recreation building
- thursday, oct. 28, at 7 p.m. in the milford civic center.
- thursday, nov. 4, at 7 p.m. in the carpenter’s union hall in new castle.
- tuesday, nov. 9, at 7 p.m. in caesar rodney high school.

more information is available from mark ivy at 302-739-0285.

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