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## FOREIGN SERVICE

Overseas duty may be an exciting and lucrative goal.

**F**or as long as I can remember I have been a book guy, but never more so than since I retired. Reading requires time, and I have had more of that these days.

I just read the autobiography of a Wisconsin-born-and-educated Roy Chapman Andrews (1884-1960). Born in Beloit, he knew he was going to work outdoors for a natural history museum and explore the world.

His first job after graduation from Beloit College was at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. He started as a janitor and ended up museum director.

Andrews was a superstar during his working years and made five daring journeys into unexplored territory in central Asia, especially Mongolia and the Gobi Desert. The trips were well-organized and resourceful and set new standards for exploration. His trips scored unbelievable treasures that helped explain the history of the Earth and man. During his career Andrews collected whales, seals, mammals, reptiles and just about any animal you can think of; many are still on display at the museum. His autobiography, recently reprinted, is titled "Under a Lucky Star." Discover magazine lists it as one of the 25 most outstanding science books ever written. So exciting was his life that there are persistent rumors that R.C. Andrews was the person the popular movie character Indiana Jones was based on. I don't know if that is true or not, but even the rumor gives evidence of how exciting his adventurous life was. Andrews' friendship with Douglas Fairbanks and Fairbanks' desire to do a movie of Andrews' life probably inspired the rumor.

So what has this to do with those in

the golf course industry? It has to do with the difficult job faced by college grads who graduate with a degree in turfgrass science, as well as experienced and qualified superintendents looking for a golf course. In my life we have gone from a place where a

well-educated and prepared for a turf career in foreign service? It certainly seems plausible to me.

I have visited with any number of colleagues who have worked overseas. Steve Cook and his wife Robyn enjoyed their time in Europe.

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We have gone from a time when we built a golf course each day in America that had to be staffed to today where there is little new domestic golf course construction. I have read that many golf course architects are now working almost exclusively overseas, especially Asia (the places where Roy C. Andrews spent so many exciting years). Some of those architects have even moved there.

So, there it is. Maybe overseas duty as a golf course superintendent is not only an option, but also an exciting and lucrative goal. It could be that an undergrad turf science option would include coursework in international relations or studies. Might the coursework include intense study in foreign languages – Chinese or Russian or Korean, for example? Construction of new golf courses in Brazil could be a catalyst to learn Portuguese. Wouldn't it be valuable for a developer to have the chance to hire someone so

Mel Lucas has spent time overseas and has fascinating stories. A friend loaded up with greensmower parts before he left visits Wisconsin to go back to his position outside the U.S.

Such a career aspiration isn't for everyone. What if you are married and ready to start a family? Do you want to do that in a society very different from ours? What if you already have children – do you want to be separated from them? What about health care and safety issues?

On the other hand, there are tax advantages to working across either ocean. I didn't investigate what they specifically are and what they could mean. But it seems a few years overseas at a good salary and low or no tax obligations could set a person up financially for years to come.

There are no easy answers when considering this as a career path; it is a highly individual thing. Read "Under a Lucky Star" and see how adaptable Roy Andrews was and how he prospered.

Are there any turfgrass Indiana Joneses among us? GCI