

PEER-TO-PEER: BETTER TURF THROUGH NETWORKING

MGCSA members were asked: What do you love about your job most? ...and what is not so much fun?

What I love most about my job is putting together a plan, executing that plan, and seeing the results over time with the ultimate goal of creating a drastic improvement. Within this planning process are a number of little "games," which ultimately affect the results of your plan. By games I am referring to communication with members, research into new products and methods, analysis of the efficiencies of operations and many more. Playing and winning the "games" is both exciting and rewarding and ultimately ends up creating a better product for the membership of Northland Country Club. I also very much enjoy the idea of maintaining an ideal playing surface for my favorite sport, working on a Donald Ross design,...how much space do I have, I could go on for awhile. The things that are not so much fun about my job are getting caught up in the day tasks and losing perspective on what it is I actually get to do for a living and where I get to do it. Also, the free time I miss out on with my family.- *Chris Tritabaugh, Northland Country Club*

What I love about my job: Helping people. Working with supts, sports turf managers and other turf professionals helping them see progress in their work. Building relationships over the years. Making friends with a wide range of turf managers throughout the upper Midwest. We are great people! Learning something new everyday from my customers, peers and suppliers. I also enjoy traveling through Minnesota and Wisconsin. They are truly two of the most beautiful states in the country. What I don't like: Spending a lot of time living out of a suitcase. Driving in cold, snowy weather. Putting up with all the big company/corporate politics and lip service! - *Joe Churchill, Seed Solutions, Land O'Lakes*

The thing that I love the most about my job is showing up early in the morning and getting out on the golf course. The solitude, the fresh air. Also I love the respect that I get from the small town people here in Montevideo for just doing the best that I can at my job, working hard, and creating great golfing conditions. The thing I least like is showing up on a weekend and one of my crew decides not to show up. Also, I hate irrigation problems!! Why can't the system just fix itself?? Oh, don't forget that 85mph wind that we had sustained for an hour last summer; that wasn't too much fun either. I believe it was around 350 man hours for the clean-up.- *Jeremiah Niebolte, Montevideo CC*

I love being outdoors and working together as a team to achieve a common goal. Not so much fun is the decline in the golf economy that is making it more difficult to maintain the golf course at our current standards with limited budgets. - *Brett R. Hetland, CGCS, Brooks National Golf Club*

As a vendor, or affiliated contractor to the MGCSA I like helping people the most. I get a feeling of self worth when I can assist someone in this industry, "teach" them to understand what a component is doing, why a problem is occurring and how it can be corrected. The people that I deal with are all professionals and are looking for a professional to assist them. A second item that I like about my job is working with the other employees at our company; we are like an extended family. The item I like least in my job is calling someone about paying an outstanding invoice or letting someone go. This is never exciting, and doesn't happen all that often. I realize that if someone has not paid an invoice, it is normally because of a hardship or tough times that hopefully will pass soon. If someone has to be let go it is normally for a lack of performance, a hardship, or tough times. - *Tim Berquam, Bergerson Caswell Inc.*

It is really gratifying to be able to make meaningful things happen, things that look like accomplishments that can stand on their own, and are not just on a daily check list. The price to be paid, however, can be a rather severe restriction on leisure time. - *Mark Stennes, S&S Tree Specialists*

What I enjoy most is being outdoors. - *Dan Hinton, Jackson Golf Club*

I think the ever-changing nature of the business is the best part of the job. That and the fact that it is the second best job in golf. Only thing better would be to be able to make a living playing. Too old for that now. Worst thing about the job..lack of respect for what we do for the industry as Superintendents.- *Walt Braunig, Thompson Oaks GC*

What I love is the passion I feel for the golf course and nature. Feeling that 'high' when I check out the course. Feeling euphoric when I'm dead tired. I love going out to my passion every day! What is not so fun is dealing with backstabbing employees; one can fix any problem, but you cannot fix broken trust! - *Riley Kieffer, Dakota Ridge*

Best part - being outdoors. Enjoying God's creation is by far the best part of the job but also those late evenings on the course, especially as an Assistant Superintendent and young Superintendent. I have often said that you can learn more about yourself and the golf course between 6-9 pm than between 6-9 am. Not so much is the unpredictable weather. Then again, the job wouldn't be as exciting if I always knew what was coming!- *David J. Soltvedt, CGCS, The Ridge at Castle Pines North*

If I had a job in my profession currently, I

would still honestly say I liked everything about it. Especially being outdoors and having constantly being directly involved with the decision-making process. I also grew to like the constant changes that occur. Things such as environment, regulations, finances, memberships and personnel. To see over one's career the technology advances, countless research programs and development within the industry, just makes you love your profession even more. The combination of these factors can make EVERY day different, challenging and rewarding. And that single concept of challenge is what makes all of us in this profession tick. On the other hand, if I were to pick something that really wasn't much fun for me, it would have to be seeing your course or a friends put through the devastation of Mother Nature's fury. Personally, and amongst some of my best friends in the business, I have had to get through and help others get through some awfully discouraging events. - *Chip Lewison, CGCS, Associate Member*

The best part of my job is seeing the beautiful course conditions, knowing that your direction of your summer help provided your course with the best playing conditions possible. The not so much fun is plowing our never ending snow we have had almost every other day this winter. - *Charles A. DeGrio, Monticello Country Club*

Love the perfect, calm, 65 degree, morning cup moving in June when you get to the 3rd green which is away from the shop and completely quiet. The sun is coming up through the trees and you pause, look around and realize that everything looks almost...perfect. It is 3 below zero today and I can smell that morning from here. I don't like the inevitable phone call, on one of those mornings about the oil or irrigation leak, that shakes you out of the peace and quiet. I can smell that morning from here as well. Now it is 5 below zero. - *Jason Swanson, Hidden Greens*

In the spring I love to see the course coming back to life, the greening of the grass and the trees leafing out. The return of the critters on land and in the air. In summer I love to see the sun rise over the dew laden course as the staff works in harmony like a horticultural orchestra to produce our daily symphony, a well maintained golf course. In fall I love to see the arrival of frost and the colors in the trees. In winter I love the quiet peacefulness as the golf course sleeps under a blanket of white. My dislikes are too few to trouble over. In these times I am grateful to have a job that includes a beautiful 250 acre office that I love to work in. - *Michael Sonnek, Spring Hill Golf Club*