A Profile (Cont'd)

A Superintendent’s Dream By Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG

If I could imagine the worst day for a greenkeeper, it would go something like this:

1. Wake up an hour late as alarm clock fails. Take alarm clock to backyard and strike it crisply with 9-iron.
3. Go over crew assignments with both assistants. Decide we can’t rake bunkers or mow fairways because of absent employees.
4. Instruct the second assistant to put out the pink colored, ladies day flags while performing the daily course setup.
5. Second assistant calls on radio to tell me of many severe indentations in the practice putting green, likely cause during the previous night’s wedding rehearsal from high-heeled shoes. Says there must be 1,500 holes in the putting green.

2002 GCSANC Meeting Hosts Still Needed

If you would like to host a GCSANC meeting in 2002, please contact GCSANC Board Members Roger Robarge or Jeff Shafer. There are still many opportunities available.

Membership Report from the June 13th Board of Directors Meeting

New Member:
Alberto Julian Canedo Gilroy Golf Course Class B

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scene in Caddyshack” and ask him to clean it up himself.

3:00 — Receive notice in today’s mail that seven of my favorite pesticides have been banned for all future use on golf courses in our state. Homeowners will still be able to purchase them at their favorite lawn and garden store, though. Hmm, I wonder whether I can recruit lot owners with lawns fronting the golf course . . . nah, never mind.

3:33 — Longtime ladies day golfer asks why all of the maintenance is always performed on ladies day — for the 122nd Tuesday in a row. She wonders why we can’t work at night to stay out of the way of golfers. I tell her I’ll consider it.

3:49 — Equipment mechanic tells me that 15 vendor salespeople stopped by the course today, each without an appointment.

5:15 a.m. — Border collie faithfully wakes me up with a lick on my face.

5:22 — Check progress of my golf stocks. All have split 2 for 1, with dividend increases.

5:46 — Check answering machine and voice mail. No messages.

6:05 — Learn of pythium outbreak on all of the greens. The crew has gone home and I can’t get in touch with anyone. I jump on the sprayer and spray all the greens myself.

11:11 — I wake up from an evening nap and realize all this has been a terrible dream.

But . . . if I could plan a perfect day, it would go something like this . . . .

5:15 a.m. — Border collie faithfully wakes me up with a lick on my face.

5:22 — Check progress of my golf stocks. All have split 2 for 1, with dividend increases.

4:45 — Arrive at office. Strap on radio unit and pager. No messages.

5:46 — Check answering machine and voice mail. No Messages.

6:05 — I tour entire course. It looks great and is playing great, too. Greens rolling 10 feet, smooth as silk, firm as a table top. Rest of course is firm and fast.

7:30 — Have joint employee annual reviews for entire maintenance staff. They take my constructive criticism, praise and recommendations seriously and ask if there are any other ways they can improve their job performance and attitude. Way to go.

8:42 — Club president calls and states new course policy that all department do not have to do business with members, or their friends, anymore.

9:55 — Green chairman calls and asks me to prepare the agenda, as usual, for tonight’s green committee meeting. Also asks if I will play golf with a different foursome each week to get golfer feedback. Why, of course!

10:04 — Mother-in-law calls and delays month-long visit. Indefinitely.

10:10 — Review employee applications on waiting list of those who what to work for me.

10:15 — Go back out on course and run into a member known as “Mr. Grumpy,” my No. 1 nemesis. He says that he is playing much better now and that the course really has improved and is in the best shape ever (even though it is in the same shape as always). I finally tell him that his perception of course conditioning is always in direct relation to how

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GCSANC Quick Profile

Name: Andy Slack
Employer: Spot Water Management
Position: Owner/Peon
Years in the Golf Business: 13

- Previous Employment: Sierra Pacific, West Star, Golf Enterprises, Kerrey Machinery in Indiana
- Education: BS in Turf Science - '91 Purdue University
- GCSANC Work or Interests: Scholarships, Scholarship Tournament, Web Stuff, or wherever I can help.
- Other Organizations: SNGCSA, Cactus & Pine GCSA, Midwest Regional Turf Foundation, GCSAA, Furry Friends, Purdue Alumni Assn.
- Family: Dog - Zoysia, Wife - Bish (Elizabeth).....in that order!
- Interests Outside of Golf: Friends, traveling, spending time with Zoysia, basketball
- Favorite Vacation: Honeymoon in New Zealand
- Favorite Course to Play: San Francisco Golf Club
- Course You’d Like to Visit: Pine Valley
- Strangest Thing You’ve Witnessed On The Golf Course: 10th Wonder of the World - the water bubble under sod, or 110v felt through wet grass when there was a nick in the wire!
- What You’d Be Doing If You Weren’t Involved With Golf: High tech sales/service of some kind, or I’d love to own/operate a bar/restaurant.

• What You’d Be Doing If You Weren’t Involved With Golf:
• Strangest Thing You’ve Witnessed On The Golf Course:
• Course You’d Like to Visit:
• Favorite Vacation:
• Other Organizations:
• Family:
• Education:
• Previous Employment:
• Interests Outside of Golf:
• Favorite Course to Play:
• Course You’d Like to Visit:
A Superintendent’s Dream (Cont’d)

he played on any given day. He thinks about it and says that I might be right.

10:42 — Run into “Mr. Suggestion Box” on the back nine. He complains that all golfers should repair ball marks on the greens. I tell him that he is the worst offender of anyone who plays on our course and that he better “walk the walk.”

11:07 — CFO calls and says monthly financial statements are complete. Maintenance department is right on budget, as usual.

11:33 — Manager calls and asks me to join her for lunch in clubhouse.

11:40 — Chemicals ordered on the Internet are delivered on time, as promised.

Noon — Have enjoyable “working lunch” with manager. She tells me I am doing a great job and hands me a proposed five-year contract extension with a signing bonus and clause detailing terms in case of early termination.

12:30 p.m. — Take 15 minute nap.

12:45 — Give speech to women’s golf association. They thank me for the great condition of the course. Chairwoman says the women golfers realize that we do not do all of our maintenance only on ladies day Nirvana.

1:35 — Equipment salesperson calls and asks for appointment to see me - five days later.

2.13 — Finish applying granular fertilizer to entire course. It rains, as predicted, 1 inch immediately after we are finished.

2.17 — Head pro calls and suggests that golf carts be restricted to golf cart paths for the rest of the day because of rainstorm. He adds that he has put on two extra marshals to monitor that the golfers will stay on the paths.

2:37 — Equipment manager reports no equipment breakdowns today.

2:40 — Have thank you party for maintenance staff funded by proceeds from the soda pop machine that they faithfully use in the employee lunchroom. Quite a few of my employees tell me that I am a good boss and person and that they really like working for me. They ask if any of their friends can get jobs.

3:13 — Head pro calls and inquires one week in advance about a proposed 11 a.m. shotgun tournament and asks whether I will have enough time to get everything ready or should we do it at noon instead. Noon it is.

3:22 — Three superintendent pals and I set up monthly golf game at my course for next Monday.

4:04 — Chapter president calls and asks if I want to be the chapter delegate at the next meeting at GCSAA headquarters. You betcha.

5:30 — Green committee meets in maintenance building employee lunchroom and studies course is in great shape and to keep up the good work. Adjourns 30 minutes early.

6:30 — Have wonderful dinner with spouse and family at home. Can’t wait to get back to work tomorrow.

Resolving Conflicts: Prepare for a Tough Conversation

You’re about to discuss a delicate issue with a peer or employee and you don’t want to blow it.

Here’s how to confront conflict gracefully

• **Focus on being clear.** Don’t worry about how others might react to what you say. Replace worries such as, “I don’t want Jim to resent me” with “I want to define the problem in fair terms.”

  *Remember:* You can’t control how others react, so don’t try

• **Anticipate and rehearse.** Plan how you’ll respond to various scenarios.

  *Example.* Know what you’ll say or do if the other person becomes defensive, criticizes or cries.

• **See the big picture.** If you’re losing sleep over tomorrow’s dreaded meeting, maintain perspective. Realize that it’s just one day out of many this year — in the wider scope of things, it’s not so important.

Adapted from *Difficult Conversations.* Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen, Viking Press, (800) 788-6262

Credit: *Communication Briefings,* June, 2001

**Did You Know That………..**

On October 10th 1932 Mr. F. J. Wellhouse from the Westinghouse Electric Company gave a presentation on lighting the golf course to our chapter.

The 1st Superintendent / Professional Tournament was held at Sunol Valley G.C. in November of 1978 and was won by Paul Dias, CGCS and Brad Lozares of Saratoga C.C.

In 1975 GCSANC policy was established that the outgoing president and their facility would host the Annual Election Meeting.

Credit: *Divots,* June 2001