

WHY?

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One morning, while working at St. Andrews Golf Club back in 1973, I was having breakfast with John Lapp. I told him that I wanted to become a golf course superintendent. He asked me, "WHY?" I proceeded to tell him what I thought were the good points of his job, i.e., driving around the course in a truck (a 13-year-old's statement), working with your hands and being around golf. Well, John then responded with what he felt were the bad points of the job, i.e., no summer vacation, not being with your family and dependent on the weather to perform your job.

It's 23 years later, and I often find myself asking the same question, WHY? Why did I ever become a superintendent! It's A.S. (always something) between floods, heat,

cold, dead grass, tall grass, players' expectations, boards and employees. I do not know how anyone can keep his head on straight. Who in their right mind would accept a job where you are expected to control Mother Nature, work long hours, have 40,000 people a year trample over one of the most sensitive grasses in the world and still have the course in US Open condition at all times. The funny thing is, we all try to do this at one time or another.

So why become a superintendent? It hit me the other morning at about 5 a.m. as I was watching a deer cross my 15th fairway with a coyote in chase. I came up with some positive points on why I became a golf course superintendent. What a great place to work. I see things in nature that a lot of other people will never see in their lives. I provide a product that a lot of people use for their enjoyment. We have many good people in our organization that would give the shirts off their backs to help me.

Golf is a great game, and I am proud to be part of it. These are just a couple of my reasons for becoming a superintendent. I think it is important that we look at why we chose our profession, especially when the weather, course conditions and players have gotten you down.

John Lapp was right; I do not like not being able to take a summer vacation, spending so much time away from my family or Mother Nature affecting course conditions. But the answer to the question WHY is, because I enjoy being a golf course superintendent.

One other quick note. As golf chairman, I would like to remind everyone the MAGCS has a prepayment policy for all the meetings. We must give host clubs a count prior to the event. It makes it very difficult to give an accurate count when there are five to ten people signing up the morning of the event. ■



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